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Allegiances

FoxClan

Leader: (nine-lives, most in-charge)
Foxstar - unusually large flame-colored tom, with a tan-ish underbelly, face, tip of tail, and black paws, green eyes. (Apprentice: Flamepaw)

Deputy: (second in-command, takes over if leader dies/retires)
Voleclaw - dark gray tabby she-cat amber eyes. (apprentice: Winterpaw)

Medicine cat: (Heals the clan, gets prophecies)
Squirrelfrost - small, dark ginger tabby tom, blind blue eyes.

Warriors: (Toms and She-cats without kits)
Ottercloud - Dark brown she-cat, dark blue eyes. (apprentice: Dazzlepaw)
Hornetclaw - light brown tabby tom , amber eyes. (apprentice: Ravenpaw)
Dustclaw - gray tom, green eyes.
Sorrelheart - tortoiseshell she-cat, green eyes.
Berrytail - cream-colored tom with a stumpy tail and amber eyes.
Finchfeather - dark brown tabby she-cat, green eyes.
Frostfoot - white she-cat, blue eyes.
Doveheart - light gray tom, light green eyes.

Apprentices: (Toms and She-cats in training to become warriors or medicine cats)
Ravenpaw - white tom with dark gray splotches, blue and green eyes.
Winterpaw - pale gray she-cat with brown stripes, green eyes.
Dazzlepaw - dark brown tabby she-cat with a pale secondary, amber eyes.
Flamepaw - flame-colored tom with a black stripe from nose to tail-tip, a white secondary, and green eyes.

DeathClan

Leader; Deathstar - dark gray tabby tom, white secondary, dark blue eyes.

Deputy: Foxstep - dark ginger tabby tom, dark green eyes. (apprentice - Oakpaw)

Medicine Cat: Swallowheart - light brown speckles she-cat, amber eyes. (apprentice: Bananapaw)

Warriors: Dusttail - gray she-cat, green eyes.
Snowpelt - Pure white she-cat, amber eyes.
Dapplepelt - calico she-cat, blue eyes.
Webwhisker - brown tabby tom, orange eyes.
Lakefoot - Blue-gray tom, amber eyes.

Apprentices: Oakpaw - brown and white tom, green eyes.
Bananapaw - Ginger and white she-cat, yellow eyes.

Queens: (She-cats expecting or nursing kits)
Muddyfoot - point-colored she-cat, blue eyes. Mother of Leafkit (lilac pointed tom), and Ocaenkit (Blue-gray pointed tom).

Prologue

It was around night time, with the moon shining like a diamond high in the dark night sky. Beneath it, cats slept. Well, most of them. Some were on patrols, or guard duty at their clan's camp.

Two cats in particular, a large ginger tom, and a golden tabby tom, were standing together near a flowing river named the Sunningrocks, talking. The golden tom looked especially angry, glaring up at the ginger tom with anger.

You could see the frost on the ground around them, ever so lightly touching the grass, dirt and sand. The golden tom spoke through a hiss, growling a bit. “Are you even listening to me? We aren’t going to survive this leaf-bare, the twolegs that came before us scared most of the prey off!”

The ginger tom flicked his bushy, fox-like tail dismissively, looking unbothered. “I’m sure the prey will come back. Besides, we don’t own just one territory, we own two. Remember? We have DreamClan territory AND SunClan, Lionfern.” the tom said calmly.

The golden tom, Lionfern, lashed his tail a bit in anger, his amber eyes burning. “Foxstar, that doesn’t matter! We don’t know if the twolegs had poisoned the river! I know you’re hiding something!”

Suddenly, Foxstar backed away from Lionfern, looking terrified. He unsheathed his long claws and his big ears pinned against his head. “Lionfern, there’s a badger behind you!”

Lionfern looked behind him in the blink of an eye, scanning the area. He didn’t see anything. Was he joking? “Where? I don’t see anything.”

“Right there!”

In the morning, the camp was bustling with activity. Except nobody had been on patrol or out to hunt yet, because they hadn’t seen Foxstar nor Lionfern. They were getting worried, and Voleclaw was trying to assure them they would be okay. “Cats of FoxClan!” She yowled, climbing the Highrock and staring at the panicked cats. “I’m sure Foxstar and Lionfern are-”

She cut herself off when she saw Foxstar walk into camp, holding a limp Lionfern. Her draw dropped. She saw that Lionferns’ neck

had been ripped open violently, with big claws. She could tell what had happened.

Every cat looked over at them. Some gasped, others stayed silent in shock. Lionferns' paler golden tabby daughter, Shiningflower, waddled out of the nursery and saw the commotion. She looked flabbergasted, staring in terror.

Shiningflower approached Foxstar, along with Lionferns' dead body. "W-What happened?" She asked shakily, looking at Foxstar, desperate for the answer.

"He was slain by a badger," Foxstar meowed loudly, dipping his head respectfully. "We will mourn his loss, but alas, I knew this would happen. StarClan spoke to me."

Shiningflower looked at him with wide frightened eyes, her thick neck fur sticking up. "What do you mean?"

"StarClan had told me that your future kin are a curse. They told me this in a dream. And now, look at that, Lionfern is dead." Foxstar said, holding his head high and eyeing every cat in the clearing. "We must kill the kits when they are born."

Hornetclaw, a good friend of Shiningflower, jumped in front of her, his fur standing on end, his ears pinned, and his claws unsheathed. "You will not be killing any kits. What kind of leader kills newborns?"

The cats of the clearing starts yowling their agreement. Foxstar turned to look at him, his eyes blazing with both fury and respect. "You dare challenge me? Your leader, one who saved you from the Twolegs?"

"You did nothing. We would've had more warriors now, if it weren't for you. Now care to tend to your 'picking a new deputy' job?"

"Get out of our territory!" Ravenkit squeaked, leaping at his mother, Shiningflower. She yowled playfully, and Hornetclaw, who always took care of kits, tried to protect her.

"Yeah! Who do you think you are, stealing our prey?" Ravenkits' sister, Beekit, hissed playfully at them. Her black pelt was shining with health, and her few splotches of gold showed that she was definitely Shiningflowers' kit. And Lionferns' grandkit.

"Don't kill us!" Shiningflower pleaded, pretending to be pinned by Ravenkit, who was glowing in pride. "Don't you obey the warrior code?"

Meanwhile, Foxstar and Voleclaw, who was now deputy, were watching them play. Voleclaw looked a bit nervous, her tail flicking occasionally, while Foxstaar was watching seriously, thinking. He suddenly muttered to Voleclaw.

"Kill them. Make him suffer. I want to watch Ravenkit live a horrible life, on what he deserves."

Should've killed me while you had the chance.

Chapter One

It was past sunrise, not close to sunhigh, but it was day. The sun shining through the apprentices' den is what awoke Ravenpaw. He blinked his eyes open, groaning a bit at the sun.
Of course, every other apprentice was out, training or hunting. Ravenpaws' mentor, Hornetclaw, was always letting him sleep more though. "Sleep is key to being focused," he would always tell him. "If you sleep too much, you'll be tired and can't train. Same with waking up too early."
Sometimes that isn't true. At times, waking up early is what Ravenpaw wants to do. Except nobody wakes him up, so he sleeps. It sucks.
Ravenpaw stretched, flicking his tail groggily as he left the den. He looked around for Hornetclaw. He wanted to hunt today. But then again, Hornetclaw probably would let him hunt anyway, because he lets him pick.
He looked over near the Highrock, where the more senior, experienced warriors were chatting with Foxstar; Hornetclaw, Voleclaw, Ottercloud, and Frostfoot, to be specific.
Hornetclaw noticed Ravenpaw and nodded to the other warriors before padding over to him calmly. "Good morning, Ravenpaw."
"Morning, Hornetclaw," Ravenpaw mewed groggily, still a bit tired but excited to hunt. "I was wondering if I could hunt today."
Hornetclaw nodded. "Of course you can. Make sure you get enough for the elders."
"Okay," Ravenpaw responded before padding towards the gorse tunnel. *I should probably head towards twolegplace*, Ravenpaw thought to himself as he sped up into a trot. Any good hunter would know that Twolegs always have rats and mice near their dens. Probably because they never take care of their dens like cats do, or mark their territory with scents.
Ravenpaw soon picked up the scent of rabbit in Tallpines, the pine forest that leads to twolegplace. He followed the scent, before seeing the rabbit, chewing on some sort of food. Ravenpaw dropped into the hunters' crouch, staying downwind so the rabbit couldn't scent him. "Remember, a rabbit will scent you first, but a mouse

will feel you first." That's what Hornetclaw always told him.
As soon as he got close enough to pounce, he stopped. He suddenly launched himself onto the rabbit, biting into its neck before it could escape. The rabbit went limp, and Ravenpaw buried it so he could come back for it once he was done hunting. That's how you keep other predators from stealing it. Everyone knows that.
After a little bit of hunting, Ravenpaw made it to twolegplace. He was going to catch a few mice when he heard rustling in the bushes a few tail-lengths away from where he was. He perked up, looking over to see, or hear, what it was.
He could tell it wasn't something like a mouse or a rabbit; the rustling indicated it was something larger than that. With all means, it was either a kittypet, or Hornetclaw. So Ravenpaw decided to just go over and see what it was. This was his chance to use his training. Ravenpaw dropped into a crouch, stealthily moving towards it. He was careful of where he put his paws in case he could make too much noise. One stick, or one leaf, and he would be noticed too soon. He wanted to make sure that this kittypet knew what clan they were messing with. If it was a kittypet, that is.
Ravenpaw hid in a nearby bush, waiting for the creature in the bush to come out or make itself known somehow. He waited, and after a bit, it came out, revealing itself to be, not a kittypet, but an enemy clan cat: Muddyfoot.
He knew it was Muddyfoot. He had seen her in his past gathering, and he knew that she was a nursing queen. She had two kits: Leafkit, and Oceankit. They weren't much younger than him, as they were probably 2-3 moons old right now, while Ravenpaw was only 7. He did remember that they were born when he was a kit, with his mother, Shiningflower, and sister, Beekit.
Ravenpaw stood up and approached Muddyfoot. She looked distressed. Was she lost? He spoke to her calmly, keeping his cool. Even though he wanted to show off his fighting skills to a puny kittypet.
"Muddyfoot, what are you doing in FoxClan territory?" Ravenpaw asked her. She turned around and looked a bit scared, but relieved that he was here.
"I've lost my kits!" Muddyfoot exclaimed, sounding extremely worried. That explains a lot, Ravenpaw thought to himself. He nodded respectfully to Muddyfoot. "When did you last see them?" He asked, tilting his head a bit.

"I had been getting some fresh-kill from the pile, and when I went into the nursery to watch them, they were gone!" Muddyfoot wailed, her tail was drooping in sadness. Ravenpaw felt a pang of sympathy for her.
"I'm sure they're around some territory somewhere. "We'll find them," he assured her. She didn't really like that, because she wailed in distress again. "But what If we don't? What if they were taken by a hawk, or a badger or something? Even a twoleg could've taken my babies!"
Ravenpaw felt a little awkward now. What was he supposed to do? That's when he heard pawsteps coming from behind him. They both turned to see Hornetclaw and Voleclaw carrying two tiny kittens, most likely Muddyfoots' kits.
"You found them! Oh, thank you!" Muddyfoot yowled gratefully, running over to them and nuzzling her kits. She snatched them away from Voleclaw and Hornetclaw, before smothering them with motherly love. *I wish I had a mother,* Ravenpaw thought, envy surging through the tips of his *fur. But I don't even know who my father is.*
Muddyfoot nodded respectfully at him, Hornetclaw, and Voleclaw before trotting back to her own territory. He knew she would probably be hearing it for venturing into FoxClan territory, since it was against the code. Hopefully Foxstar wouldn't be too mad and understand her motherly instincts.
"By the way, Ravenpaw, I suggest you gather up your fresh-kill and head back to camp before Foxstar gets mad," Hornetclaw told him, although kind with his words. Ravenpaw nodded, and traced back his steps to dig up the pray he hunted while out.
By the time he was back, he had a squirrel, a vole, and two mice. He put them in the fresh-kill pile, and watched as Foxstar gave him a nod of acknowledgement. "Good hunting?" He asked. Ravenpaw nodded. "Very good hunting."
"Then Lionfern was wrong about the twolegs scaring away the prey." Foxstar commented, which Voleclaw, who was sitting nearby, nodded to in agreement. "You're always thinking more than the others, Foxstar."
"Of course I am." Foxstar stated with pride for himself. Ravenpaw rolled his eyes. His son, Flamekit, who was about to be an apprentice in the next few sunrises, was no better. He was spoiled, and thought he could do whatever he wanted because his father

was the leader.
I bet if I DID have a curse, I wouldn't have caught much. Nice try lying, Foxstar.

Chapter Two

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather beneath the Highrock for a Clan meeting!" It was Foxstar who yowled this. Ravenpaw had just been woken up by Hornetclaw when Foxstar called the meeting. "It's Flamekits' turn to join you in the apprentices' den," he had told him.
Ravenpaw gathered around along with everyone else, sitting between Winterpaw and Hornetclaw, just like he always did. Flamekits' mother, Voleclaw, pushed him to the front, roughly running her tongue through his fur. "Mom! You're messing up my mane!"
"Hush, and let me do what I'm supposed to. Now, behave."
Foxstar finally spoke, his voice ringing through the hollow so that everyone went silent. "I gather you all for one of the best part of being a leader. Today, Flamekit will earn his apprentice name."
Warriors murmured their agreement, but Ravenpaw did not. Flamekit always was rude to him, probably because his mother and father were always bad influences on him. Flamekit was never behaving, and he's ran out of camp without permission before. They found him in an abandoned badger nest once. "I thought I could kill one!" He had said.
"Flamekit. You have reached your sixth moon, and it is time you become an apprentice," Foxstar said proudly. Flamekit pranced forward.
"From this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Flamepaw. I hope StarClan lights your path in becoming the greatest warrior you can be."
"I will be your mentor."
Flamepaws' eyes lit up at that, and he held his head and tail high as he came up to Foxstar and touched noses with him. Ravenpaw rolled his eyes. Of course his mentor was the leader! Foxstar wanted nothing better than for Flamepaw to be his best.
"Meeting dismissed." Foxstar jumped down from the Highrock, with Flamepaw at his tail. Hornetclaw stood up and looked down at Ravenpaw. "Well, Ravenpaw, we better do some battle training. We'll be training with Winterpaw today." He padded towards the

gorse tunnel. Ravenpaw lit up. He was training with Winterpaw! He ran to catch up with Hornetclaw, who was already out of the gorse tunnel. Winterpaws' mentor, Voleclaw, never let them train together. She usually would say stuff like "He'd ruin it!" Or something of that sort to him.
As Ravenpaw and Hornetclaw padded through the forest towards the sandy hollow where apprentices trained, Ravenpaw couldn't help but wonder why Voleclaw was letting him train with Winterpaw. What was so different about today?
Wouldn't she want to train with her son, Flamepaw? But then again, Ravenpaw had seen Foxstar take him out to learn the territories, but that's what all new apprentices learn.
When they had arrived at the training hollow, WInterpaw and Voleclaw were already waiting for them. Winterpaw looked calm, but the deputy looked very impatient. As soon as they went into the hollow, Voleclaw flicked her tail in annoyance, standing up and approaching Hornetclaw. "Took you two long enough," She snorted. "But I guess that's what a curse does to you."
Ravenpaw bristled. There was no curse! He was sure of it! Foxstar probably didn't even say anything that sounded reasonable! He probably just made it up to get away with his bloody leadership! After all, Hornetclaw had told him that Foxstar had been rumored to have killed Lionfern.
Winterpaw suddenly trotted up to him, nuzzling him affectionately. "Hello, Ravenpaw."
"Hello, Winterpaw." Ravenpaw said calmly. He purred a bit, nuzzling his head against hers. Voleclaw pushed her away from him. "Alright, let's get to training. Since I'm deputy, I will be the one in charge."
Both Ravenpaw and Winterpaw sat in front of Voleclaw, while Hornetclaw sat to the side, watching them to make sure nobody was hurt. "Alright, I think we should just see what both of you have learned so far."
Voleclaw sat back, waiting. Winterpaw jumped away from Ravenpaw, dropping into a crouch. Ravenpaw saw her focused on his legs. He knew this move. She was going to try to trip him and pin him. But he had a plan.
As soon as Winterpaw launched herself at him, he was ready. He dodged out of the way and ran his paw down her side. If he would have had his claws out, she would've been badly hurt, and he most

likely would have won.
But that's not how it works right now. Ravenpaw watched as Winterpaw tumbled to the ground, and Ravenpaw launched himself at her, quickly pinning her due to his greater strength. She struggled underneath him, but to no avail. He ran his back paws down her stomach, and she went limp in defeat.
Ravenpaw let go of her. He knew she was going to fake it and lunge at him. And when she did, he flipped himself onto his back and kicked her in the air right before she landed. Winterpaw went flying, landing on the ground, out of breath.
Both Voleclaw and Hornetclaw looked at each other, impressed. Voleclaw then looked at Ravenpaw. "That was a pretty good fight, for someone with a curse. Winterpaw, I expect better," She added, growling at her apprentice, who looked a bit ashamed.
Ravenpaw felt a bit of sympathy. Every time he trained with Dazzlepaw, she would mock him and make fun of him. Even though her mentor, Ottercloud, was nice about it. But then again, Ottercloud was always nice, she was still a bit weary around Ravenpaw though.
But everyone was weary around Ravenpaw. They thought that Ravenpaws' 'curse' was going to doom their clan. But Ravenpaw knew it was wrong. He knew something was up. Why would StarClan curse a kit before they are even born? Or, do you think StarClan told him something else?
After training, he, Winterpaw, and their mentors walked back to camp. Winterpaw and Ravenpaw were both tired, and they walked a bit slower. Ravenpaw couldn't clear his thoughts. Why would anyone even believe a thing like that?
Is that even believable? HOW is that even believable?

Chapter Three

A few moons had passed since Flamepaw had become an apprentice. It was a full moon tonight, and Ravenpaw was wondering if he was able to go to the Gathering for once in a lifetime. So he trotted to Foxsars' den to ask.
"Foxstar? May I ask you something?" Ravenpaw asked, sounding a bit nervous. He had never come over here before, because he never actually needed to, since Foxstar hated him anyway. But, today was one for the first.
"Come in, Ravenpaw," Foxstar meowed. Ravenpaw entered his den and stifled a gasp. There were a few skulls in his den, most likely for decoration. Some looked like foxes, one a badger, some possibly cat skulls. Basically, a bunch of bones.
"I was wondering if I could go to the gathering with Hornetclaw and Winterpaw for once," Ravenpaw stated nervously, trying not to stare at the bones.
Foxstar nodded, to Ravenpaws' surprise. "I suppose every apprentice has to go eventually. You, Winterpaw, and Flamepaw will go."
Ravenpaw nodded respectfully, but deep down, he was excited. He had never been allowed to go to a Gathering, but going with Winterpaw? He was finally getting somewhere in life! Maybe not as far as he wanted to, but he's getting somewhere.
Ravenpaw left Foxstars' den and ran to the apprentices' den. He saw Winterpaw and Dazzlepaw talking. It was always hard to tell them apart because they looked almost alike, except Dazzlepaw was a big darker than her, and they had different colored eyes.
"Winterpaw, me, you, and Flamepaw are going to the Gathering!" He said excitedly. Dazzlepaw looked shocked and disgusted. She growled at him, to his surprise, and flexed her claws. "Why am I not going to the Gathering with my sister instead of some curse-ridden mouse-brain? That's ridiculous!"
Ravenpaw ignored her. She was almost as rude as Flamepaw, who had done nothing but act like he was the best since he started his training. But that's okay, because Ravenpaw was close to becoming a warrior. He was a moon away.

The sun was starting to set, and the people who were going to the Gathering were gathered around the clearing, waiting for Foxstar. It was him, Hornetclaw, Voleclaw, Flamepaw, Winterpaw, Foxstar, Ottercloud, FInchfeather, Squirrelfrost, and Sorrelheart. For some odd reason, Ravenpaw hoped he would see Muddyfoot and her kits, hopefully apprentices by now. He saw them as friends.
After a little while, Foxstar finally came out of his den, and led the group of cats through the gorse tunnel and into the forest, towards Fourtrees.
Ravenpaw walked with Hornetclaw and Sorrelheart, who kept her distance from Ravenpaw. There's no curse! Why do you believe this stuff?
Foxstar soon made it to Fourtrees. He looked down upon it, seeing that DeathClan was just entering, he flicked his bushy tail and climbed down, his clan in pursuit. Ravenpaw scrambled after him the best he could.
When he reached the bottom, he saw a few dozen cats gathered, some DeathClan, while others FoxClan. Ravenpaw spotted Muddyfoot, but he didn't approach her. She was an enemy clan, after all.
Ravenpaw just decided to sit with Winterpaw, who was chatting with 2 DeathClan apprentices. He sat next to her and listened in on their conversation.
"Foxstar had picked the wrong kit as his apprentice," Winterpaw was saying, which the two apprentices were listening to. "Flamepaw is a foxhearted mouse-brain."
"I can see that," one of the DeathClan apprentices, a white tom with one giant brown tabby splotch, spoke. He looked over at where Flamepaw was trying to speak with senior warriors.
"He's really just a push-over," Ravenpaw commented, flicking his tail in amusement. "He does no harm."
"That makes sense. He looks more harmless than a newborn," the other apprentice said. She looked the same, but with ginger instead of brown. They were most likely related, Ravenpaw could tell.
"By the way, Ravenpaw, this is Bananapaw," she paused to point at the ginger and white she. "And this is Oakpaw." She pointed at the tom. They both dipped their heads in a greeting.
"Hi, Ravenpaw," They both said, and Ravenpaw for once felt noticed. He usually didn't get acknowledged like this back at camp. Usually, everybody gave him an attitude or just completely ignored

him all together. This was entirely new for him.
Ravenpaw dipped his head in acknowledgement. "Hello to the both of you."
Bananapaw and Oakpaw nodded to him respectfully. Bananapaw glanced over at Flamepaw with a curious look before speaking lowly so nobody besides them would hear. "Is he always bothering the senior warriors?"
"Great StarClan, yes," Winterpaw stated, scowling a bit at Flamepaws' obnoxious actions. He was always on everyones' nerves. "He doesn't know how to stop, either."
Ravenpaw glanced over at Flamepaw. He was trying to talk with some warriors of DeathClan, pestering them for battle move tricks and everything. The deputy, Foxstep, and two warriors, Lakefoot and Dusttail, were getting furious. He could see Deathstar glaring at Foxstar for several moments.
"Foxstar, control your kits!" Deathstar suddenly said in a loud growl, snarling a bit. But Foxstar seemed calm as he looked back at him, speaking evenly, with a slight hint of a challenge.
"Do not question the authority of my apprentices, Deathstar. Remember I am the reason you are even a leader in the first place. Your warriors could've been mine."
Before Deathstar could respond, though, he stood up and faced the two clans, speaking up throughout the crowd, which made them silent. "Let the gathering begin!"
Deathstar rolled his eyes as Foxstar continued to speak. "FoxClan has had good prey, and a new apprentice. Flamepaw, with me as his mentor."
Everyone's eyes turned on the prideful apprentice. He shined, puffing his chest out and sitting straight under their gazes. Ravenpaw, Winterpaw, Oakpaw, and Bananapaw didn't care, though. They knew who he really was.
"We have had no signs of DreamClan nor NightClan yet since they left as well." Foxstar said, sitting back on the great rock. Ravenpaw was confused. There was more clans? When? Why did they leave? And where did they go?
Deathstar stepped forward, giving Foxstar a sideways glance as if he would strike at any moment. Ravenpaw stared at the big cat. He was a shiny, tough-muscled dark grey tabby, with glimmering dark blue eyes. They were clear in the full moon light, with his white secondary color glowing like the full moon itself.

"We have had no signs of NightClan nor DreamClan either, Foxstar. DeathClan is thriving, with two new apprentices; Leafpaw and Oceanpaw."
The clan looked over at the two pointed toms. One was a more unique color, looking purple, while the other was a blue-gray point. The both looked a little nervous under the eyes of the two clans. Ravenpaw recognized them as the kits Muddyfoot had been looking for that one time.
"And must I add, that we may not have spotted them, but we have scented a few strange scents. It smelled of must, like a cave. Keep your eyes peeled, Foxstar, because I'm telling you, they're coming back soon."

Chapter Four

The meeting was over. Both FoxClan and DeathClan were heading back to their camps, with Ravenpaw still wondering about what their leaders had said. What other clans did he mean? And what strange cats had the smell of cave and must? Rogues?

He couldn't put his paw on it. There had not been rogues in a very long time, before Ravenpaw had even been born. The last time Hornetlcaw said there were rogues, it was right before Foxstar became leader.

Hornetclaw had told him a bunch of stories about Foxstar. He had said that Foxstar had been a rogue himself, originally named Spark. He had come to the clans and saved them from the great treachery of the attack from a gang of foxes. So had Deathstar. It was too good to be true, and a tom named Sparrowflight had made him leader.

Hornetclaw had also told him that Deathstar had once been a rogue, named Death. But the real question was, why didn't Foxstar pick the name Sparkstar, like his rogue name? Was it to show that he had defeated the foxes?

Ravenpaw had no idea. He kept wondering about it as they crossed the river with a tree trunk and over into their camp. Winterpaw was walking besides him, along with Hornetclaw on his other side. Winterpaw didn't bother to question, but Hornetclaw could tell something was bothering him. "What's wrong, Ravenpaw?"

"I'm just thinking," Ravenpaw said in a low tone. "Both of the leaders aren't clanborn. It's like our ancestors, from the Four Great Clans. Their leader Firestar had been a kittypet."

"It's good to know you're curious, young one," Hornetclaw said, looking around to make sure nobody was listening. "But nobody knows. I'm sure any cat can be loyal if they really try, you know?"

Ravenpaw sighed. He knew deep down that he was right, but he had a strange feeling about Foxstar. Something was off about him. "But that isn't really in the Warrior Code." He grumbled. Hornetclaw looked at him, a bit stern. "The old Warrior Code is not our new one. SHall i make a lesson on that? Because you certainly

don’t understand such things just yet.”

“RIght. We could do that tomorrow.”

As Ravenpaw entered his den, he saw Dazzlepaw napping. He rolled his eyes. She probably would pester Flamepaw and Winterpaw, and then leave him out tomorrow morning. And now he made the biggest mistake. Now he’d be lectured with the Warrior Code tomorrow morning, and he hated that lesson.

So he curled up in his nest, tired from the countless walking from Fourtrees and back. He quickly fell asleep, and when he opened his eyes, he saw a lot.

Luscious green grass, trees and bushes surrounded him everywhere. It looked like the forest side of FoxClan, except it was way too fresh. He looked around, taking in the bright surroundings. He knew where he was. He was on the path from Fourtrees to FoxClan camp, and he’d head back to camp from here.

He padded at a steady pace, following his instincts towards the FoxClan camp. As he followed it, he noticed that the sun had set without him even noticing, and yet he was still able to see almost clearly.

He saw a few unfamiliar cats, hunting, battle training, or just resting. They looked at him in surprise before just minding their own business. Soon, though, as Ravenpaw neared the camp, he heard voices. Unfamiliar ones.

“What kind of name is that? To make it obvious what you are?” One voice, a tom, said, sounding annoyed. Another voice spoke, another tom. This one was more calm.

“Calm down. And be quiet. I can sense him.” Ravenpaw peeked through the entrance of the camp to see 3 cats; two toms and one she-cat. One of them was a big, golden tabby tom, with only one eye and a giant scar on his face and throat. His one good eye glanced at him, and he had a warm, welcoming look.

The other tom, a full black with green eyes and a sleek, thin coat. Like a RiverClan cat from the Four Great Clans. And the she-cat looked like the golden tom, just paler. She was a lighter colored golden tabby, with green eyes and a big scar on her throat, like a bite from a fox or a badger.

The black tom glanced at him and seemed to recognize him immediately. “You. Come here, now.” Ravenpaw was confused. Did he know him? Was he SUPPOSED to know him? He had no idea,

but he approached the three obediently.

The she-cat was staring at him, making him uncomfortable. They all acted like they had been friends! Who were they? And what did they want? That is, until the golden tom spoke. “Do not be afraid, Ravenpaw. We are StarClan cats; I’m Lionfern. That is Nightflame, and the she-cat is Shiningflower. You may not remember her.”

Shiningflower? That was his mother! And Lionfern… That was the deputy who had been slaughtered by a badger, and he had been blamed to be a curse because of it. But who was Nightflame?

“Let’s get this over with.” Nightflame grumbled, turning to look at Ravenpaw. He had a stern look on his face. “Listen, Ravenpaw, you are no curse. You are much greater.”

“I know,” Ravenpaw said. He knew the curse was a fake. StarClan would never curse an unborn kit… right? Is that how it works?

“No, not like that.”

“A darkened tom shall rise from shadows deep, To unmask a hidden traitor and restore clan peace…”

Chapter Five

Ravenpaw woke up earlier than usual, his dream still in his mind. Who was Nightflame, and why was HE in his dreams of all cats? Surely he was more important than he thought, if he was in his dream.

But the prophecy… What did it mean? Who was the hidden traitor? And why was he a part of it? Surely it was hidden in plain sight. Someone who he could easily suspect it to be. Flamepaw? Voleclaw? Dazzlepaw?

Foxstar?

No, it couldn't be him. He was the leader, there was no possible way. But it did say it was a hidden traitor, so it can't be obvious. Maybe it's Hornetclaw or Winterpaw, because Foxstar would make more sense and be not as surprising. Right?

Well, of course, as the nerd of the Four Great Clan he was, he had said something dumb again, and now he had to be told the Warrior Code. Again. He had already been told it twice, so he recognized it clearly. And he hated it.

Ravenpaw noticed that all of the other apprentices were asleep, besides Flamepaw. Flamepaw's nest was empty, and untouched by the looks of it. Most likely, Foxstar took him out for some sort of training, as always.

Ravenpaw stretched lazily, flicking his tail slowly, before standing up and trotting out into the camp. The dirt ground was damp with rain and dew. It must've rained last night, because when Ravenpaw touched the ground, it was muddy.

It reminded him of Muddyfoot, for some odd reason. And then he remembered what Deathstar had said during the Gathering. Who were NightClan and DreamClan? And why had Hornetclaw never told him about them?

Was there more clans that nobody had spoken of? And if so, did they come before, or after the Four Great Clans? And where did they go?

Ravenpaw didn't have time to think, because Hornetclaw soon left the Warriors' den and saw him. He looked a bit surprised as he approached him and spoke. "Why are you awake so early,

Ravenpaw? Eager to learn the code?"

"Absalutely not," Ravenpaw muttered, rolling his eyes and looking away. Clearly, Hornetclaw wasn't very enthusiastic about Code learning either. Not even the mentors enjoyed teaching their apprentices such things. "I've already heard it twice."

"Foxstars' rules. Remember, the leaders' word is law. Any protests-" Hornetclaw started to speak one of the rules, but Ravenpaw cut him off in a dismissive tone. He was already trotting to the camp exit, flicking his tail impatiently. "Yeah, yeah, you can tell me when we're at the training hollow."

"Eager to learn now, are we?" Hornetclaw teased, following Ravenpaw out of camp. Why was Hornetclaw not leading him? I don't know, ask yourself that, you Warrior Cats nerd. Yeah, I see you behind the Wattpad app and your screen, staring. Menacingly. Or maybe on your Google Docs if you're an early reader. I still see you.

Ravenpaw and Hornetclaw trotted through the forest, heading towards the training hollow. It was greenleaf, but not for long. But for now, the grass was green, bushes, trees, green. The only exception is that it was starting to get chillier. Leaf-fall would be here soon.

Ravenpaw watched as a few birds splashed around in a rain puddle from the rain that had fallen the previous night. It amused him to see prey play like a few moon old kittens, It was oddly adorable.

Soon, he and Hornetclaw made it to the hollow. The bad thing was that Foxstar was there, with Flamepaw. Ravenpaw internally groaned. Foxstar was always conveniently there when he was going to get lectured, and he hated him.

Hornetclaw took the lead, sitting as far away from Foxstar and Flamepaw as possible. Ravenpaw followed behind him, giving a deadly look at Flamepaw as he did so. Flamepaw didn't see it though, because he was too distracted.

Hornetclaw sat down next to a big bush, which was located at the end of the training hollow. Which, by the way, was also called the sandy hollow. But for now, they called it the training hollow.

Ravenpaw sat down in front of Hornetclaw. He was ready to be lectured about the Warrior Code, even if it meant pure embarrassment in front of the leader. Embarrassment didn't matter to him in front of Flamepaw, though.

“Okay, Ravenpaw,” Hornetclaw began, resting his tail on his front paws. This was always a long lesson. “What is the first Code?”

“Protect your Clan, even at the cost of your life. Do not give notice to any other cat or Clan, they are your enemies.” Ravenpaw resided, He remembered the wretched Code all too well. And he hated it. Hornetclaw knew that.

“Good, good. And the second? This is easy, you know.” He meowed to Ravenpaw, who quickly answered. “You may be prohibited to hunt or trespass on other Clan territories, unless given permission.”

Hornetclaw just nodded his approval, while Ravenpaw was already sick of this. He did NOT want to deal with this any more, with Foxstar and Flamepaw listening in. Flamepaw had only been told the Code once, and this was his third time! But Ravenpaw just continued to the third one.

“Just continue until you are done.” Hornetclaw commented. And that’s what Ravenpaw did.

“Challenge all trespassing cats, including kittypets, rogues, and loners. Kill them if they proceed to not leave.” Ravenpaw hated that one. He didn’t see the need to kill a cat if necessary. If anything, killing a cat could cause a war. The old Code was better, and if Ravenpaw ever was leader, he’d change it all.

“Killing is necessary if you are being attacked by a cat that is on your side of the territory, or if the battle needs it. Otherwise, do not kill ruthlessly.” He hated that one too. Why did killing even become allowed in the first place? Did Foxstar, Deathstar, or both of them make these stupid rules?

“Prey is to be eaten, and not to be played with, as that is a waste.”

“The word of the leader is the Warrior Code just as much as the Code itself is.”

“Every cat can get their own food from the pile, even kits. If they are too weak, then they are useless, and therefore, must be put to rest.”

“A kit must be six moons old to become an apprentice, but can be older if as some sort of punishment.”

“A cat cannot be made deputy without at least having mentored one apprentice, and at least lived one or two Leaf-bares. They have to understand hardships to be able to be a deputy.”

“When the leader dies, or is exiled, the deputy can become leader. If there are enough protests, they can vote for a different leader.”

“When the deputy dies, is exiled, or becomes leader, they must choose a new deputy before Moonhigh.”

“A Gathering will be held amongst Clans to ensure all Clans are safe. Use their safety as an advantage.”

“A cat must never reject saving a young kit under apprentice age, even if they are from their enemy Clan. If they are from an enemy Clan, keep them until they learn to take better care of their kits.”

“All cats reject the soft, disgusting life of a kittypet.”

“Borders must be checked at least twice a day. Challenge all trespassing cats, and make no friends from cats outside of the Clans.”

And with that, Ravenpaw had finished. Hornetclaw nodded his approval, impressed. Clearly, he needed no more lessons on this topic. He had recognized the Code inside and out, even if he hated it.

But Ravenpaw couldn’t help but steal glances at Foxstar and Flamepaw. Something about them was off. Their existence in general didn’t sit right with him. If Foxstar had made this Code, then why? Did he hate Deathstar? And why would he?

But Hornetclaw and he just went back to camp, with Ravenpaw lost in thought. He couldn’t put a paw on why this Code insisted on death and being only friends with their own Clans. It made no sense to him.

What was so wrong with the old Code?

Chapter Six

When Ravenpaw and Hornetclaw went back to camp, it was bustling with activity. Winterpaw and her mentor, Ottercloud, were putting prey in the pile, while Voleclaw, who went with them, was eating. Ravenpaw didn't know why, because she had already had a meal this morning. It was around Sunhigh, she didn't need another meal already. She was fattened enough.

Voleclaw was a rather big cat, and it wasn't fluff either. She was mostly fat, eaten two to three times a day. Foxstar was even starting to get sick of it, complaining that she did not need more food than others, and has told her multiple times to go live with the kittypets, or get exiled. But she still didn't listen.

And there Foxstar was, walking into camp with Flamepaw. They both noticed that Voleclaw was eating, and Ravenpaw could see the fire in Foxstar's eyes. He muttered something to Flamepaw before storming towards her, furious.

His claws were unsheathed, and he snarled as he spoke to her angrily. "You spoiled brat, how dare you eat without my permission? I told you not to eat unless I say so, kittypet!" He then slashed her in the face with his sharp, thick claws. Ravenpaw gasped.

Voleclaw slashed him back right on the muzzle weakly, her fatness too much for her to move much. She almost looked pregnant with such a belly. "I eat when I please, fox-heart!"

Foxstar snarled. "That's it!" He grabbed her scruff, lifting her up and throwing her across the clearing. She landed near the warriors' den. She struggled to get up, scarlet blood dripping from her forehead.

"Run, Voleclaw. Run away and never return." He growled, bristling. Voleclaw looked at him with fear in her eyes, and she nodded. She then got up and ran out as fast as she could. Foxstar looked over at all of his Clan, speaking up with a merciless tone.

"Find her, chase her, and kill her. Now."

Most of the warriors hesitated, except for a few. Flamepaw, Dazzlepaw, Dustclaw, Berrytail, and Finchfeather did not. They ran after her, claws unsheathed and ready for battle. Ravenpaw

watched with horror.

He was so puzzled on why Foxstar was trying to kill one of his only surviving loyal followers. Even if she did eat so much, he could've kept her prisoner and starved her to live off of her own fat like he said he would. But that might be more torture than running away and being murdered by your ex-friends.

But it still made no sense. Who would be the deputy now? Possibly Berrytail or Finchfeather, but Ravenpaw didn't know if they ever had an apprentice before. There was no way it would be Hornetclaw, because Foxstar didn't really like him. But then again, there was always a possible chance.

But for now, it was for Foxstar to decide. Ravenpaw wasn't the leader, so why was he caring? Even though the deputy could be the next leader. He had to know it was a good cat, who will lead wonderfully, or an evil one, who will manipulate the clan.

But for now, Ravenpaw was going to eat. He went to the fresh-kill pile and grabbed a finch, eating away from everyone. Not soon after, though, Winterpaw approached him with a mouse for herself. It was a rather small one, which also confused him.

"Are you not hungry that much?" He asked Winterpaw, who took a bite of her mouse. She shook her head.

"I ate a mouse this morning, so I'm avoiding eating so much like Kittypetclaw." Winterpaw meowed between mouthfuls of mouse. Ravenpaw knew she had a point: Voleclaw always ate at least two-three meals a day. Even though I just said that.

Ravenpaw just continued to eat his finch in silence, with Winterpaw by his side. When they finished their meal, they both licked their lips, nodded at each other in acknowledgement, and walked their own way.

Ravenpaw walked into the apprentices' den. He was about to curl up in his nest, when he heard Foxstar yowl from the clearing:

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey, gather at the Highrock for a Clan meeting!"

Ravenpaw groaned. He hated when Foxstar called a meeting before he was about to rest, but he knew it was important this time. Now, he would choose a deputy.

Ravenpaw walked out of the den and into the clearing. The clan was gathering near the Highrock. Waiting for Foxstar to speak. He sat next to Winterpaw and Hornetclaw, also waiting. He wanted to know who the next deputy was.

“Cats of FoxClan,” he began, lightly wagging his tail a bit. “We all have just witnessed the downfall of Voleclaw. Now, we need a new deputy.”

Everyone was in suspense, especially Ravenpaw. He knew it was most likely berrytail or Finchfeather, because they were really his best followers. But that was proven wrong.

“Ottercloud.”

Ottercloud was surprised by that. She looked around, as if there was a mistake. She then padded up to stand in front of Foxstar. She looked extremely nervous about this, and so was Ravenpaw.

“Ottercloud, you are a loyal, resilient she-cat. You deserve more than the deputy role, but this will have to do.”

Ravenpaw was shocked. Why Ottercloud? She didn’t really follow him much, and was usually doing her own thing with Winterpaw. But her? Deputy? It didn’t make sense.

Unless, Ottercloud was the hidden traitor.

Chapter Seven

"Clan meeting!" Ravenpaw had known that Foxstar would call another. All of the warriors who had left to chase down Voleclaw had returned, and Dazzlepaw needed a new mentor. It had been hard for her to comprehend what happened, or why it even happened in the first place. It made sense to Ravenpaw though.

Ravenpaw, once again, sat next to Winterpaw and Hornetclaw. He was waiting impatiently to see what the warriors had to say. But for now, he waited. He couldn't do anything besides that anyway.

"Now then, we have some news, and some new things to attend to. FInchfeather, Berrytail, what happened to Voleclaw?" Foxstar asked loudly, making his voice heard throughout the crowd.

"She escaped onto the DeathClan border. We had waited for a patrol, but the patrol had refused to give us permission to chase her. They ordered that they would deal with her and to leave her alone." Answered Finchfeather, a bit nervously. Foxstar, with a frown, huffed and growled slightly at his own thoughts.

"If they don't kill her, and I see her again, I'll kill her myself. If so, I must visit DeathClan tonight to ensure her death."

Ravenpaw wasn't as shocked this time. He knew Foxstar was a ruthless killer, and Voleclaw disobeying him so many times had broken the final branch. She had always been on his last nerve, and yet, she broke it.

"And now, Dazzlepaw, once Voleclaw's apprentice, needs a new mentor."

Ravenpaw and everyone else was eagerly thinking about who exactly it would be. It might be obvious, but they'd have to find out.

"Finchfeather." Foxstar meowed, looking at the she-cat. She was a bit surprised but understood her mission. "You will be Dazzlepaw's new mentor."

Dazzlepaw and FInchfeather approached each other and touched noses, with Dazzlepaw just rolling her eyes a bit. She had most likely hoped to be the deputy's new apprentice, just as she originally was. Although, being Voleclaw's apprentice most likely was not as fun as it had seemed.

Ravenpaw was starting to wonder how such a fat cat could run all the way into DeathClan camp and escape their grasp. She was so fat, she almost looked pregnant. But it was very unlikely that she actually was pregnant, since nobody actually liked her as much as they liked some of the other she-cats.

But then again, it could've been some sort of loner or kittypet, knowing her. There were so many possibilities it could be if she was actually pregnant. She could even be pregnant with DeathClan kits!

But for now, the meeting was over. Foxstar had called it while Ravenpaw had zoned out, and now the camp was going back to their normal routines, as if they seemingly forgot all about the meeting already.

Ravenpaw followed Winterpaw into the apprentices' den, before hearing Hornetclaw call him from behind. "Ravenpaw! Where are you going? We have to hunt, remember?"

Ravenpaw groaned. Of course they had to hunt. It was getting closer to moonrise, and he was not in the mood to hunt right now. Even if it's basically in the Code that he had to hunt once a day, it was still tiring. Maybe he could ask to just not, since they already did so much that day. He had to stick up for himself.

Ravenpaw turned around and walked up to Hornetclaw, trying to look calm. "I was actually going to ask if we could skip that today, since we've already reviewed the Warrior Code, and had to sit through two meetings."

Foxstar, who had been standing around nearby, heard him say that and wasn't very happy about that. He approached them both with a slight disapproving frown. "That's against my rules, Ravenpaw. You know that's not allowed."

Ravenpaw rolled his eyes at his leader's words. It was so dumb to have to follow these stupid rules. Why did the leaders' word have to be law? It made life even worse than it actually was. He'd have to edit that when he was older, or maybe protest it. Ottercloud, if ever becoming Otterstar, would probably agree.

But Ravenpaw protested against Foxstar anyway. "But I've already had a lesson today, and done so much. It's just one day."

Foxstar thought about it for a moment, contemplating those words. After a few heartbeats, he just nodded in understanding, to Ravenpaw's surprise. "Fine. But only today, don't expect this to happen very often."

Ravenpaw nodded his respect to Foxstar, and also slightly to

Hornetclaw, before trotting back to his den. He had finally gotten what he wanted! A good night's rest instead of hunting until moonhigh. He had never done such things before. Maybe Foxstar was lightening up on him, but he doubted that. But hope was sparking him just a tiny bit.

When he entered his nest, he saw Winterpaw and Flamepaw arguing about something dumb. Again. They always argued over basically nothing, and Flamepaw usually started it, so it was nothing new for him.

"Ravenpaw is weak! Why would you be friends with such a sad, small, cursed apprentice? Why don't you DISlike him?"

"Because he is nice and smart and actually strong, unlike YOU!" Winterpaw snapped a retort, which made Flamepaw flinch a bit. Ravenpaw watched at the entrance. This was hopefully not going to get violent, like last time.

"EXCUSE ME!?" Flamepaw was outraged by her statement, and he arched his back with unsheathed claws angrily. "I will be telling Foxstar about you! You deserve nothing, like Voleclaw!"

Winterpaw huffed in disbelief, while Ravenpaw stepped in and spoke up before Flamepaw could get so violent. "What do you think Voleclaw thinks of Foxstar?"

Flamepaw did not hesitate to answer, not knowing that Foxstar heard the wrong parts of what he said. "That Foxstar is a stupid, fox-hearted, mouse-brain, careless, wretched, useless, ripoff fox who thinks he's better than everyone else. That's what she-"

"Repeat yourself, Flamepaw. I'm what?" Growled Foxstar from the entrance. Flamepaw quickly turned to look at Foxstar, shocked he had heard him wrong.

"I didn't mean I thought that, I was saying that Voleclaw-" He started to speak but was cut off by Foxstar grabbing the scrawny small tom by the scruff and dragging him away.

"I've heard enough. Come with me."

Without permission to protest, Flamepaw only squeaked like a kit as a defiance mechanism. Ravenpaw watched, trying not to laugh at him. And with that, Flamepaw was taken into Foxstar's den, not to be seen that night.

It was really peaceful that night, not having to deal with Flamepaw's bickering. But it felt… off. Like something was seriously wrong.

Chapter Eight

When Ravenpaw woke up in the morning, he saw Flamepaw sitting in his nest, staring at the ground. By now, he would've been out training, so why was he still here? Was something wrong with him?

Ravenpaw would've gone over to ask, but they both hated each other, so he doubted he'd answer anyway. Either that, or he'd just give him a useless retort or insult for no reason, which he always did.

And besides, for once Flamepaw actually knew what it was like to have Foxstar mad at him. Foxstar was usually a very angry kind of cat, so it only made sense for him to finally snap at his two very loyal cats, Voleclaw and Flamepaw.

Those two cats, along with Berrytail and Finchfeather, had always followed him. Most of the other cats disliked him, only following him out of fear. The only cats so far in Clan history to have disobeyed Foxstar were Sparrowflight, Lionfern, and now Voleclaw. But Voleclaw was a fool to begin with.

And now, Flamepaw was in trouble. Ravenpaw felt a bit guilty, but not at the same time. Flamepaw had always been mean to him, so it was kind of kamra. But at the same time, he hadn't done anything to get in trouble besides argue a bit. But he had still been on Foxstar's side. He had been talking bad about Voleclaw.

Flamepaw noticed that Ravenpaw was awake and spoke in a whisper so that Foxstar did not hear him speak. "Ravenpaw, you've got to help me. Foxstar is insane!"

Ravenpaw wanted to laugh at his face. He was just realizing that? After all this time? And why would he help the cat who never helped him? But he spoke in a whisper as well. "Why should I help you? You're nothing but rude to me."

"Because Foxstar is crazy! I never knew how bloodthirsty he was!" Flamepaw whispered urgently, but he did not seem to care about Flamepaw right now. He never seemed to care when Ravenpaw was in trouble. Why care now?

"Why help you? You've never helped me." He responded dismissively. He did not want to help the poor young cat.

“I know! I-I know I’ve been rude to you, but that doesn’t matter! Your life was never in danger like mine is right now! You’ve got to help me, please! No other cat will!”

“I guess I’m part of those ‘no other’ cats, because I’m not lending a hair to help you.” Ravenpaw stretched and walked out of the den, leaving Flamepaw to pray to StarClan by himself. That’s when he heard Foxstar call a clan meeting, and his heart dropped a bit. Should he have helped Flamepaw? Was he in danger?

“Clan meeting! Now!” Foxstar growled loudly at the clan, which made everyone awake and go to the clearing. When Ravenpaw saw Flamepaw, he was worried. But Foxstar didn’t even look at him, as he had the morning patrol by his side: Berrytail, Hornetclaw, and Doveheart.

Ravenpaw sat next to Winterpaw, and Flamepaw sat at his other side, with Winterpaw giving both of them a confused look. She then whispered to Ravenpaw. “Why is he sitting with us? Isn’t he on Foxstar’s side?”

“Not after last night,” Ravenpaw pointed out lowly, reminding her of last night’s fiasco. “He thinks he’s crazy.”

She chuckled, before being silenced by a yowl from Foxstar. He spoke urgently, as if he was doomed to death by StarClan. “Our morning patrol has spotted Voleclaw on the DeathClan border! We need to send some cats to spy, find her, and kill her before she gains their trust!”

That’s when Foxstar said the names he never thought he’d hear for this.

“Winterpaw, Ravenpaw, you will go and spy.” Foxstar announced, looking down at them with an unreadable expression. He was shocked. Why him? He had always said he was a curse, so why would he choose him and Winterpaw? Why not Finchfeather or Berrytail?

Yowls of protest came from the crowd. “The cursed cat?” “We’re doomed with him out!” “Maybe he’ll die like we’ve waited!”

Ravenpaw shrunk back at all the sudden negative attention towards him. He wanted to use this to prove himself. To prove that he could do things. To prove he wasn’t a curse.

“Silence! My choice on my own. If they return, and they bring back good reports, they will prove there is no curse. But if they don’t…” Foxstar paused, thinking about his choice. Ravenpaw already knew what he was planning.

“Then they will be killed as traitors and a curse to their clan as they were born as.”

Chapter Nine

"Don't do anything mouse-brained, Ravenpaw," Hornetclaw said sternly, trying to assess the situation Ravenpaw and Winterpaw had gotten themselves into. Ravenpaw knew that he and Winterpaw were in a big situation, and they had to get through it. Without dying.

"Winterpaw, I believe in you." Ottercloud meowed to her, licking her ear comfortingly. Winterpaw was not convinced. If they did not find Voleclaw, they would be dead. And if they even lied, that would be worse, because if Foxstar ever found out they lied… Death.

"We'll be fine. Right, Winterpaw?" Ravenpaw said confidently, looking over at the nervous she. She didn't nod with that. She looked as scared as a mouse. "What if we don't come back with a good report?"

"Then we'll find another way out of it. I'm sure everything is going to be okay. Don't worry about it. You're safe with me, okay?"

Winterpaw sighed. She wasn't sure if she wanted to believe him or not. But for now, she nodded, and with that, they left the camp. The mission to find Voleclaw starts now.

Ravenpaw and Winterpaw knew that they had a long journey ahead of them. They couldn't just walk straight into DeathClan territory, they'd be killed! So Ravenpaw had suggested they waited at the DeathClan field territory border, since they hunted there more often. It was more rich with rabbits, and they loved those.

Ravenpaw and Winterpaw were passing by the training hollow. They saw Dazzlepaw and Flamepaw battle training, with Flamepaw looking very weak. It made them wonder if he was okay, but that wasn't important right now. It did give Ravenpaw a reason to spike up a conversation, though.

"Hey, why does Flamepaw look so hungry?" Ravenpaw asked as they passed by, heading towards the Great Falcon Tree. Winterpaw shrugged.

"He's always scrawny. It's not surprising." Winterpaw said rather dismissively. Ravenpaw was expecting her to brush his health off,

but he kept pushing the question.

"No, not like that. He looks weaker, skinnier."

"As he deserves," She muttered, jumping a small stream. Ravenpaw didn't understand why she couldn't help him understand. He needed answers, before something serious happened to Flamepaw. It was bad enough that Voleclaw was gone. They needed warriors.

Even though some she-cats have planned kits, he wasn't sure if they'd be apprentices in time in case DeathClan ever placed an attack. Or if they'd prove to be worse, with more warriors busy with kits than their warrior duties.

Besides, Sorrelheart was about ready to move into the nursery anyway. It was kind of exciting to see more kits, but then Sorrelheart would not be able to protect the clan. Why was he so worried?

But Ravenpaw just jumped the small stream and followed behind Winterpaw, trying to get rid of his thoughts like a tick or flea. To be fair, they were definitely acting like a bug right now. It made him more frustrated.

Winterpaw glanced behind her. Noticing Ravenpaw's troubled look, she slowed down to walk beside the tom. "Don't worry about Flamepaw. He'll be fine."

"And what if he isn't? Our clan needs warriors if it is to survive." Ravenpaw said worriedly. He wasn't sure of what she had said to him.

"We'll worry about that later. Right now, we have to wait for a DeathClan patrol." Winterpaw meowed, pointing out the fact they had reached Fourtrees. Ravenpaw had not noticed how fast they had been walking.

"Alright, fine, Winterstar." Ravenpaw joked. Winterpaw swatted at him playfully, and together, they tumbled around in a playfight. A ball of energy, made up of FoxClan's strongest apprentices. And, the bravest.

"What is going on over here?" They both froze as they heard the voice of DeathClan's deputy, Foxstep. He was a fierce, strong, muscular warrior, with ginger fur as leaf-fall leaves, and burning green eyes that pierced into your own with no fear.

Both apprentices stood up to face him. He was with Oakpaw, his apprentice, along with Webwhisker and Muddyfoot. Muddyfoot!

Muddyfoot was the cat he had helped to find her kits and keep her

calm. She must trust him, right? Or would they kill them where they stood, a pawstep onto their border, where they had not been permitted to be?

(Sorry for the shorter chapters, I'm going to work on making them a bit longer, but not too long! Hope you guys are enjoying my book so far, I've been trying to write more often. Thank you guys for reading!)

Chapter Ten

"You better explain yourself, apprentices, before we rip you to shreds." Foxstep demanded threateningly, growling in annoyance. Ravenpaw gulped in fear. He knew that they were dead meat unless they told the real reason why they were here.

"We didn't notice we passed the border. We were planning to wait for a patrol, to address an exiled cat who had crossed the border." Ravenpaw said, sitting up straight to try to hide his fear. He didn't want to be killed.

"Which exiled cat are we speaking of now?" Foxstep asked, as if Foxstar did this often. "And why did he send two young apprentices?"

"Voleclaw. She was selfish and a fool. And I have no clue why he sent us. I think it's an assessment on our skills."

The entire patrol stiffened at her name. They must've done something with her if they reacted like that. "Oh, yes. Her. She's in our camp, resting. She was very injured."

Of course they were sheltering the code-breaker. She must have lied to get them to help her. But why?

"Foxstar has told us to tell you that she must be killed. She has broken the Warrior Code too many times to be trusted." Winterpaw intercepted, sticking up for Ravenpaw. They both clearly did not want to fight the DeathClan deputy.

"Then you can come to our camp and speak to Deathstar about it. He thinks she is innocent." Foxstep grumbled, looking at Webwhisker and Muddyfoot. "Is that okay?"

"I think they should leave." Webwhisker growled, flexing his long claws. He was glaring at Ravenpaw, and he knew why he was. "They cannot be trusted."

Muddyfoot, on the other hand, looked at them in a kind, caring manner, as if she was their own mother. "They need to find out the truth. Bring them, Foxstep. Deathstar will appreciate your choice."

Foxstar huffed. "Fine. Follow us, no funny business."

Foxstep led them into DeathClan territory. But they had to cross the Thunderpath if they were to reach their main camp. That wouldn't be much of an issue as it had been at one point, when the

Four Great Clans existed. They rarely had monsters cross these paths any more. Which was good, it meant less deaths.

Apprentices still learned how to check and cross safely, as not to be killed in case one DOES cross the path while an unaware apprentice or warrior is crossing.

Ravenpaw couldn't help but notice the loss of trees on this side of DeathClan. The only thing that could possibly keep them well-hidden to hunt would be the small, thorny bushes that were in the area every now and then.

Soon, they arrived at the Thunderpath. It was a long, slick, black path that had a faint, strong, disgusting scent. Ravenpaw touched it with his paw, feeling the slimy yet smooth, yet also bumpy path. He moved away in disgust.

"Careful, you mouse-brain," Foxstep hissed, grabbing him back by the scruff. "Look for monsters first. Has Foxstar taught you nothing?"

Ravenpaw bristled at the comment. He was no kit! He did not need to be grabbed like one, or treated like a mindless crow. And he definitely did not need insults about his already suspicious leader. He did not need to be told about his mistakes either.

"I'll go first," Foxstep said, pushing him out of the way. He stood right in front of the Thunderpath, with Ravenpaw rolling his eyes behind him, irritated. No monsters.

After looking left and right multiple times and sniffing the air, Foxstep trotted across the road. He got to the other side several heartbeats later. It made Ravenpaw think he was the idiot. Weren't you supposed to run across it?

He acted so exquisite, yet he wasn't. He was just like any other warrior, just with the chance of becoming leader. It was very unlikely though, since Deathstar definitely had a lot of his nine lives. Foxstep was… ordinary.

"Come on then, get over here so we can get this mouse-brained meeting over with." Foxstep growled, sitting and waiting impatiently. Ravenpaw huffed. He'd claw his muzzle off if he wasn't the DeathClan deputy.

"Come on, apprentices. This is a good way to test if you're good with your senses." Muddyfoot said, putting them both behind Webwhisker to go next. Ravenpaw could feel Winterpaw getting nervous, but he wasn't exactly sure why.

Webwhisker sniffed the air, looked left and right, and crossed, just

like Foxstep. And now, it was their turn. Muddyfoot could tell they were both nervous, so she encouraged them.

"Don't be scared, little ones. The only reason we cross with caution is just in case. Monsters rarely come." She soothed them, nudging them a bit forward.

"I'll go first before you, Winterpaw." Ravenpaw suggested, which relieved her. She just nodded, too scared to speak. Like a mouse.

Ravenpaw did what Webwhisker and Foxstep did. He looked left and right, and sniffed the air. But something was not right. He smelled a putrid smell, but it was very, very faint. He shrugged it off and crossed as fast as possible. It was probably the twolegs.

But, when Winterpaw went to cross, doing what he did, he saw it. A giant monster, moving fast. Ravenpaw had to call out to her. "Winterpaw, look out!"

That's when Winterpaw disappeared under the giant yellow monster. It wasn't moving as fast as other ones probably do, but it could still hurt her.

But when it moved, Winterpaw was perfectly fine. It seemed that she went between its paws and avoided its grasp. Ravenpaw let out a breath of relief. She was okay! And then she crossed safely, looking petrified.

Muddyfoot crossed with no issue, crossing as fast as possible to make sure Winterpaw was okay, like her own mother. "Are you okay?? Are you hurt?"

"N-No, I'm fine, just a bit… shocked." Winterpaw tripped over her own words, shaking. Muddyfoot licked her and soothed her, while Foxstep growled and rolled his eyes, speaking up with irritation clear in his voice.

"If we want to get there today, we must get moving. She's not your kit, Muddyfoot."

"Fine." Muddyfoot said, following as Foxstep started moving into DeathClan territory. How would Deathstar react when two apprentices came to him about an exiled warrior in their camp? Would he be mad?

But for now, they all followed him, with Ravenpaw's mind racing. He was hoping to StarClan that this would go well.

Hello! This is a note from the author! I'd like to apologize for the amount of changing in the cover, but this time, I am going to draw

it myself.

I do not digitally draw often. I usually do traditionally, with paper and led pencils. So my plan is to try to digital draw more often.

So, I am going to redo this cover, and hopefully, it'll look good!

Sorry for the long note, I hope you guys are enjoying this book so far. I have noticed some mistakes, I will most likely edit them out when I have finished writing. I will finish up those little mistake details.

Like, the time I said Dazzlepaw's mentor was Ottercloud. To be clear, it's not.

Anyway, see ya!

Chapter Eleven

They finally arrived in the DeathClan camp. Loads of cats gave them a disgusted look, and Foxstep whispered to the two apprentices:

"I will go get Deathstar. Stay here, with Webwhisker and Muddyfoot."

Ravenpaw and WInterpaw both obeyed the strong DeathClan deputy, standing in between the warriors, both of them on either side. Ravenpaw was doing his best to stay proud, but he was growing worried whether they would be ambushed or not.

Then, he saw Foxstep approaching, with Deathstar by his side. He had a serious look on his face, and Ravenpaw got even more worried.

"You two apprentices are not welcome here. Voleclaw needs rest if she is to have her kits. Clearly, Foxstar does not care about his queens."

Kits? DId he just say… kits? No wonder Voleclaw was so big! She was pregnant! And that's why she ate so much! But who was the father? And how long was she going on being pregnant in secret like this?

Ravenpaw spoke up, concern and confusion clear in his voice. "Did she say who the father was? We never even knew she was pregnant. We just thought she was eating too much… And Foxstar is too much of a mouse-brain to tell."

Deathstar wasn't changing his mind easily. He spoke with impatience in his voice, flexing his claws. "There's nothing in the Code saying I have to give her back. You exiled her, and now she lives in my clan. And mine only. She will raise her kits here, and they will grow to be fine, wonderful DeathClan warriors."

That's when a yowl came from a small, singular den. "I'm STARVING!"

Webwhisker sighed, before leaving to grab some fresh-kill. He grabbed a rabbit and a vole, before dragging them to the den. Ravenpaw could briefly see Voleclaw, which made Winterpaw bristle.

She spoke up with a spat, growling. "That is my mother,

Deathstar. I will not stand to watch my mother be spoiled by another clan because she is carrying my newest siblings. You will give her back, or there will be war."

"Then so be it. Leave, or we will shred you." Foxstep growled, with Deathstar nodding his approval. Ravenpaw and Winterpaw left, leaving Voleclaw watching them with remorse. Had she made a mistake?

Ravenpaw and Winterpaw made it back to their camp near sunset. Foxstar immediately noticed the angry look on Winterpaw's face, and the worried look on Ravenpaw's. He approached them, and spoke up with impatience. "So? Where is she?"

"Sheltered in the DeathClan camp. She isn't fat, she's pregnant. They refused to give her back, and said they will keep her even through war." Winterpaw reported, with Ravenpaw nodding and adding to the report as well.

"They said you do not care for your queens. We also saw them feed her a rabbit and a vole while we were there."

Foxstar made a shocked, angry face. He ran to the Highrock and yowled to his clan. "FoxClan! DeathClan has declared war for Voleclaw! We must ambush them tomorrow night!"

Not many of the cats protested. A lot of them agreed, yowling their agreement and comments. But Ottercloud spoke up against it all. "Why isn't she dead?"

"She is pregnant. They want to grow her kits into THEIR clan, not their real clan!" Foxstar yowled in rage. Ravenpaw noticed the worried look on Berrytail's face. After all, he was Winterpaw's father, and most likely, the father of this litter as well.

Finchfeather spoke up as well. "We will kill all of DeathClan unless they give us Voleclaw back!"

Yowls of agreement rose among the cats, except for a few. Ravenpaw couldn't help but feel overwhelmed and guilty that he had caused this reaction out of his clan. Even though it IS their choice to react like this, he still felt as if it was all his fault.

Foxstar yowled for them to settle down. "We will attack them tomorrow night. Get ready, and get plenty of sleep. No apprentice training tomorrow, they need energy. Because when they least expect it, I will take everything and everyone Deathstar ever loved."

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(Author's add-on: I am trying to make the chapters longer, and improve my writing skills, so even though this might not be as long as I want it to, the chapters are going to start getting detailed and longer!)

Ravenpaw had gone to his nest that night to sleep as well as he could, but he couldn't. He couldn't stop thinking about the war he had just caused. If he had just told Foxstar that Voleclaw was dead…

But then, if he ever saw Voleclaw, alive, in DeathClan, HE would be the one who was dead. He could never lie to his leader without getting in serious, permanent trouble.

Around moonhigh was when Ravenpaw fell asleep. He opened his eyes in a dark forest that smelled of… DeathClan?

He suddenly heard the battle cries of cats, and he ran towards them. A few fox-lengths in front of him… was their two clans battling.

He saw Voleclaw, hiding. He wanted to get closer to her, but he was shoved out of the way. That's when he heard a loud wail from her. He saw Voleclaw, pinned by Foxstar. But then, Foxstar disappeared, and everything was dark besides the bright light illuminating Voleclaw, with three kits mewling in front of her. Then, Voleclaw went limp.

Ravenpaw awoke, startled. It was morning. He was relieved that it was all just a dream. He had started to worry that he had somehow zoned out, and that he was in the battle at that very moment.

But… was that a prophecy from StarClan? What did it mean?

Was Foxstar going to kill Voleclaw, kits or not?

Chapter Twelve

The next day had gone by at a rather fast pace, at least for Ravenpaw. Only a few warriors and apprentices were hunting. Flamepaw had been sent out with Dustclaw, but that was it. Ravenpaw thought it was because Dustclaw was a follower of Voleclaw, but then he would've sent Dazzlepaw and Winterpaw, since they were her children.

Besides, it didn't make much sense. The only thing is that he must've been weak to Foxstar, so he just used him for hunting. It most likely meant that a few of them would guard the camp as well.

Every time Flamepaw or Dustclaw would come back with prey, the clan who did not eat, or were hungry, would eat. Winterpaw refused to eat until Ravenpaw did, and now, it was their time to eat.

They both walked to the fresh-kill pile and picked through the prey. Ravenpaw picked a finch, while Winterpaw picked a vole. Next to them, Squirrelfrost was sniffing each piece of prey. He was blind, so he could only identify the prey by scent.

Squirrelfrost was the medicine cat of the clan. He could closely identify any prey, cat, or herb with his sense of smell. He had stopped multiple kits from eating deathberries, and every cat knew better than to disobey his rules.

He had a better sense of smell than the entire clan combined. It was almost like a dog was trapped inside of a cat's body.

He was a dark ginger, small tom. His dark ginger fur was almost like leaf-fall leaves, specifically the red ones. When the sun glimmered on his pelt, it was almost as if he was an angel with how much his fur shined.

He had ice blue blind eyes, with some white on the tip of his tail, paws, and a fleck on his chest. But yet he would never be able to see it…

Before the two apprentices could leave to eat, Squirrelfrost spoke up. "Ravenpaw… Can I talk to you? Alone?"

Ravenpaw looked at Winterpaw. He wanted to eat his meal with her, not talk to some all-seeing medicine cat. But Winterpaw nodded at him and whispered: "Go on. It must be important."

He sighed. He didn't want to, but if it's what he had to do, he would. He talked through his mouthful of feathers, holding his finch. "Alright, then. I'm coming."

Squirrelfrost grabbed a vole for himself before walking down to the medicine den. Ravenpaw followed close behind. This is going to take forever, he thought.

He noticed how most of the clan was lounging around, talking, stretching, or eating. That's not really a way to get prepared for battle…

Before the two cats made their way through the vine entrance, Foxstar called from the Highrock. "FoxClan! We will strike very soon! Finish your meals, stretch, and gather at the gorse tunnel!"

Squirrelfrost ignored his call and continued to pad into the den, but Ravenpaw was hesitant. Shouldn't he just finish his meal quickly and get ready to challenge DeathClan? What was so important that he had to stall his first ever battle?

"Come. The message I have for you is very important." Squirrelfrost mewed, flicking his tail in an impatient manner. Ravenpaw groaned and walked in behind him.

Ravenpaw sat in front of Squirrelfrost, the scent of many different, unfamiliar herbs filling his mouth and nose. It was almost sickening. That's when Squirrelfrost spoke up. "This is serious. Did you have any sort of dream last night?"

Ravenpaw froze. How did he know? "Y-yes…" Ravenpaw stammered, getting a little startled by his sudden question. "It was about Voleclaw. And… And Foxstar. He-"

"You tell nobody about your dreams. You keep them to yourself, and you solve them yourself. You will be in great danger, Ravenpaw. Beware of your surroundings."

For the rest of that day, Ravenpaw pondered what the crazy blind medicine cat had told him. Why did he have to keep his dreams secret? How important were they? And would they become real?

That's when he realized. If that dream was real, he must find a way to stop Foxstar from killing Voleclaw! But… how?

It was beginning to become dark outside. The camp had all finished what they were doing, and had gathered at the gorse tunnel. Ravenpaw was standing next to Winterpaw, Ottercloud, and

Hornetclaw, along with Dazzlepaw, who was crowding around Ottercloud.

She was saying things to her, like “Why do you mentor such a lame apprentice?”, or “Take me as your apprentice instead!” but Ottercloud simply ignored her. She had never been left alone much by her ever since she had become the deputy.

Foxstar soon came up behind the gathered cats. He observed them all, making sure they were ready. Then, he walked over to Ravenpaw.

Ravenpaw’s heart skipped a beat. Was he really walking towards him? Then, he walked up to Hornetclaw instead, who was behind him. But he heard what Foxstar said to Hornetclaw. Very clearly.

“If your ‘apprentice’ messes up this fight, he will die like the rest of them. And if you mess up, so will you.”

Soon enough, they were stalking through the forest, towards the dark forest, where DeathClan thrived. But Ravenpaw couldn’t get what Foxstar said out of his mind. What if he messed up? Would Foxstar kill him?

He shuddered. Not from the cold, but from the thought of being killed by the murderous cat. If only he had a way to stop him, to end his treachery once and for all. If only…

Ravenpaw shook away his thoughts. It could never happen. Foxstar most likely would still have at least seven of his nine lives left. How would he kill him seven times?

But then, he realized. The medicine would know how many lives he had left. If he asked Squirrelfrost… Yes, Squirrelfrost! He would know!

But that wasn’t his priority right now. He needed to focus on the battle ahead of him, and now… It was all that mattered right now. His life, his friends, and Voleclaw.

She mustn't die. If she dies, so will her kids, and their future. And yet, he still had a bad feeling about all of this. Something was not right.

“We will strike soon. Just wait, they are readying into their nests to rest.” Foxstar whispered commandingly. Ravenpaw was terrified. He had never been in a battle before, but here he was, trespassing right near DeathClan camp, ready to kill.

And finally, when all of the camp was in their dens, Foxstar let out

the signal. Each cat jumped into the camp and separated themselves into each den. Foxstar looked at Ravenpaw, Hornetclaw, Flamepaw, Winterpaw, and Finchfeather.

"Come. We will kill Voleclaw."

That's when yowling came from Deathstar's den. He ran out at Foxstar, trampling to the ground. "You mouse-brain! I knew you would attack! And now, we are going to kill you, once and for all!"

Ravenpaw watched as cats came out into the clearing, slicing and kicking at each other. Ravenpaw was distracted by a strong, pure white she-cat, who pounced on him.

Thinking quickly, he turned as fast as he could, slicing her across the muzzle. She yowled, but dug her claws into his shoulders.

StarClan, help me! Ravenpaw thought in fear. He rolled on the ground, trying to squish her into the ground.

Luckily, it worked. She let go, and backed away, before trying to pounce at her again. But he knew what to do. He put himself on his back, and when she missed and jumped over him, he sliced his claws down her stomach.

She screeched, running away into the horizon and out of the camp. Ravenpaw turned quickly. Where was Voleclaw? He had to save her, before it was too late!

Just then, he heard a screech. Voleclaw!

He ran in her direction, but was attacked by Deathstar. He pinned him down and muttered to him. "Foxstar was right. You are a curse. You used us to attack us and kill Voleclaw yourself! How dare you!"

"No! You don't understand!" Ravenpaw said defensively. "I was coming to save her!"

"She is busy with her kits."

This was something he did not expect to hear. Was she giving birth to her kits? Why now? *Oh, StarClan, why?*

Chapter Thirteen

"You came here to kill them too, didn't you?" Deathstar growled furiously. "You're just like Foxstar! Nothing but trouble! You may not be a curse to him, but to us! Or will you betray him, too?"

Ravenpaw was shocked. He had no curse to begin with! Why does any cat even believe it? "No! That's not true!"

"Fool!" Deathstar snapped at Ravenpaw's throat. "I could kill you right now! Tell me the truth!"

Ravenpaw spoke as best he could. "When I went back to the FoxClan camp after receiving your news, I told Foxstar about what you had said. He had been enraged by it. I didn't mean for a battle!"

Deathstar scoffed. "Lies!" He was about to swing a fatal blow to his neck when someone jumped on top of Deathstar and dug their claws into his shoulders. He got off of Ravenpaw, who was trying to see who the savior of a cat was. Was that… Dazzlepaw?

No, it couldn't be! She even believed herself that he was a curse. Why would she save him from his own death and risk her life for him? But he couldn't think about that now, because he had to help Voleclaw. But shouldn't he help Dazzlepaw…?

"Go, you mouse-brain! Go!" She yowled at him. "Foxstar is fighting his way through to her already!"

Ravenpaw ran towards Voleclaw's den, ignoring the fighting cats. He was blinded by his thoughts to save Voleclaw and her kits before it was too late. But before he entered, Foxstar shoved him aside and growled, "Move, idiot. You're in my way."

What? What in the world was 'idiot' supposed to mean? Ravenpaw turned to snap back at him but was too curious. "Idiot? What kind of language is that?"

"I meant mouse-brain, my bad. Now, stay out of my way, I'm showing Voleclaw who's boss here."

Ravenpaw froze. No! He couldn't let Foxstar kill her! He had to do something! But what? And… What cat did he get the word 'idiot' from? Is that some sort of twoleg language? Was Foxstar a kittypet before he founded FoxClan?

He sure didn't seem like that. But where did he get it from, then?

But this was no time to think. Right now, Voleclaw was in danger. Ravenpaw ran after Foxstar. Before Foxstar could land a blow on her, blinded by rage of her betrayal, too blind to see her kits being born… Ravenpaw dug his claws into his own leader's should

Foxstar let out a loud, unsettling scream, piercing his ears. Ravenpaw flinched but did not let go. He was so used to yowls or screeches, not that… twoleg-ish scream. He had never heard such a thing out of a cat before.

Foxstar reared up on his hind legs and flipped onto his back, squishing Ravenpaw. Pfft! Using the move Ravenpaw used on that white, she! That was nothing.

Ravenpaw squirmed out from under hin and slashed his claw across Foxstar's face, who had been just about to bite his throat. That was close, Ravenpaw thought. What will Foxstar do to me now, knowing I've attacked him? Can I even excuse it?

Foxstar glared at him. "How dare you attack your own leader!"

Ravenpaw spoke, anger swelling inside of him. He kept it to himself, though, and spoke shakily. "You don't understand! Look, Voleclaw is giving birth to her kits! Don't you have some decency!?"

Foxstar whipped around and noticed it; The two medicine cats, Bananapaw and her mentor, Swallowheart, were licking two kits to help them breathe. Foxstar froze. "You… you were right. Why did I not understand…"

The two kits looked nothing like Voleclaw. One was a golden brown she, with black markings under her eyes, and tan underbelly, chest and paws, with… purple eyes?

And the other, a tom, was flame orange, with dark ginger stripes and a white chest and underbelly. He had one black paw as well. Who was the father? What cat looked like… like that? They didn't really look like Berrytail at all.

But there was still a third kit. The she-kit had already begun to feed, and Swallowheart began to help the third kit breathe.

Ravenpaw tried not to look and invade her privacy but kept flinching at her tired, pained sounds. The third kit was ginger tabby she-kit.

Even Swallowheart was surprised. "Voleclaw, this one… It has no fur. It is hairless. Who is the father of these kits, Voleclaw?"

Ravenpaw couldn't help but look over in shock at hearing that. Berrytail had no hairless genes! Someone else was the father!

Voleclaw stared at the ground, ashamed. “Foxstep is the father.” She muttered, but Foxstar had heard. But by the way Voleclaw glanced at Foxstar, Ravenpaw knew that Foxstep was not the father.

“WHAT!? I REFUSE TO TAKE HALF-CLAN KITS INTO MY CLAN! WE HAVE TO KILL THEM!” He screeched, bristling with rage. But Swallowheart glared at him commandingly.

“Shut up. You exiled her. She is no longer part of your clan, but a part of ours.”

“I’ve come to take her back! Give her to me, or else you will die!” Foxstar snapped, taking a step towards her, ready to fight. Ravenpaw stopped him, standing in front of him.

“Stop! If you make these newborn kits travel, they will die! You have to let them stay here for at least a few moons. I didn’t want to attack you, but I couldn’t let you kill helpless kits, half-clan or not.” He said bravely. Foxstar looked furious but calmed himself down and sighed.

“You’re right.” He said before he backed away and called out to FoxClan.

“Cats! Retreat! We have no need to be here! They’ll learn their lesson another time!” All of the cats looked at him before heading back to camp, sprinting away. Foxstar followed, going ahead of them, while Ravenpaw stayed behind. He didn’t know if he should follow.

Deathstar walked over to him. At first, Ravenpaw thought he was mad. But when he spoke, he knew he was not. “Thank you for saving her and her kits’ lives. We will be grateful to you. You hadn’t been lying all along… and I am sorry I believed you were a curse and acted cruelly. May StarClan light your path.”

Ravenpaw gave him a respectful nod, ready to head out. “Thank you. May StarClan light your path as well. I hope none of this results in any more violence.”

And with that, Ravenpaw trotted away, leaving behind him a brand new set of allies, who may come in handy. *Don’t ruin this for yourself, Ravenpaw. Find the hidden traitor, and bring back what FoxClan’s former glory once was.*

(Sorry about such a short chapter. There was not much to write. It’s not as short, but it’s not as long as I wish it was. I hope you guys are enjoying this so far! Because soon, it’s going to get some interesting stuff… Be prepared, cats of all clans! Because the next chapter starts

something brand new…)

Chapter Fourteen

It had been about a moon since the battle. The Gathering had come and gone with no conflict, or as Ravenpaw thought it did, anyway. He had not been allowed to go due to him stopping Foxstar from 'stopping a war'. Instead, he had been told that he had made the war begin. *Yeah, right. The only cat who did that is yourself.*

It was around sunset. Ravenpaw had just come back from a successful hunting session with his mentor, as always. He usually never had a bad hunting session. Yet. He had not gone hunting through a leaf-bare yet.

That's when Foxstar walked up to them, an expressionless look on his face. "I want you two and Frostfoot to come on patrol with me around the border near the gorge."

Hornetclaw nodded, while Frostfoot was already padding over. "Let Ravenpaw put his prey in the pile first. I'm sure some cat is hungry." Hornetclaw replied.

Ravenpaw sighed. He did not feel in the mood to do more walking, but it was what he had to do. He wasn't a loner, after all. He couldn't just do whatever he pleased.

He grabbed his prey and set it down on the fresh-kill pile. Dazzlepaw, who had been looking for a meal, walked over and snatched some of his fresh-kill. "Finally! You're so slow! This probably tastes like fox dung, too! Ewww…"

Ravenpaw bristled and snapped back at her. "And you don't think you smell like that? Please, I could smell you from the barn in *DeathClan territory!"*

She did not like that. She hissed at him, her fur standing on end. "Say that again and I'll rip you to shreds, you traitor! At least I have a mother!"

Ravenpaw was furious. He slashed his outstretched claws across her hideous face, making her screech and back away. "At least my mother actually loved me! Yours only loved food!"

Foxstar and Hornetclaw both walked over and stood between them. "Dazzlepaw, how dare you be rude like that to this apprentice? I will have to stall your warriors' assessment if you keep this up."

She hissed in his face. “He started it! Why are you blaming me, and not that mistake of an apprentice? I deserve better!”

Foxstar hissed right back at her face, scaring her. Usually, when Foxstar hissed, it wasn’t very cat-like. He must have some mutation in his blood, or something like that. “You are the mistake! You are just like your mother! You deserve *nothing!* You are not allowed to have a meal, today OR tomorrow! Go to your den!”

Dazzlepaw was going to protest, but the look on his face told her otherwise. She dropped the fresh-kill and stomped off to the apprentices’ den, furious and humiliated.

“Now, come. We must be going on patrol now.” Foxstar hurried to the gorse tunnel, with Hornetclaw and Ravenpaw following behind him. They left the camp in a rush, and Ravenpaw was unsure why they needed to. What was so important?

Frostfoot caught up to Foxstar and asked the question before anyone else could. “Why are we in such a rush?”

“We are late already. DeathClan must know our patterns by now, and if they don’t smell our scent markers, they’ll steal territory!” He exclaimed, talking rather fast.

“I’m sure we can show them who’s boss if they do.” Ravenpaw stated. “We must be stronger than them if we beat them in their own camp, right?”

Foxstar did not answer him at first. They jumped across the Sunningrocks to the riverside before Foxstar spoke again.

“Nonsense. They are too stupid to learn any sort of lesson from any of us. Even if we are stronger, they will not learn. Ever.” Foxstar said angrily, swishing his tail back and forth in impatience.

Ravenpaw sighed. He knew talking to him was like talking to a beech tree. *Right. Focus on the task at hand,* he thought. *Focus.*

Soon enough, they were at the border of FoxClan and DeathClan. At first, it seemed like nothing was wrong. Until they sniffed the air. DeathClan scent. And close.

Foxstar bristled at the scent. “They’ve come to invade! Where are they? We must find them!” He barked, running to search the perimeter.

“Find who? DeathClan?” Frostfoot asked, tilting her head. She did not have such a great sense of smell like the other cats did. “Yes. Their scent is close, and Foxstar is taking a fit.” Ravenpaw replied, rolling his eyes in annoyance.

That’s when Ravenpaw heard something in the trees. His ears

perked up, and he stalked towards it. The smell was… Familiar. Who was it?

Then he realized. Deathstar!

What was he doing here? Was he going to ambush them? Kill them over a queen from their clan?

Foxstar heard him as well. He ran towards the tree, claws outstretched, before he got jumped out at by Deathstar. Stumbling to the ground, Foxstar spat in rage.

"Deathstar! How dare you be in our territory? I'll rip you to shreds, flea-bag!" He yipped at him. Deathstar looked at him with calm eyes, almost intimidating.

"How many lives do you have, o' mighty Foxstar?" He asked, licking his paw. But Foxstar was very unamused about him being in his territory.

"Hm… I'm not-"

"Four. You have four lives." an unfamiliar voice spoke from the shadows. And then appeared… Swallowheart?

"Why do you know that?" Foxstar said, almost trembling with either rage or fear. Ravenpaw wasn't exactly sure.

"Oh please, a medicine cat knows all kinds of things like that. Don't act surprised." Swallowheart replied, sitting and grooming herself casually as well. Something was off. Really off.

"And I'm about to make it three. But, of course, we could make a deal." Deathstar said threateningly. For the first time, Ravenpaw couldn't help but notice how old Foxstar looked compared to Deathstar.

"Oh really? And how do you plan to kill me? With what army?" Foxstar said, standing up.

But at the flick of Deathstar's tail, almost his entire clan came out from the shadows. "Fool! If you weren't so old, you would've smelt that."

"Now, you can let us keep Voleclaw and her kits, or we can kill you." He said, trying to bribe Foxstar. But he would not listen.

"Never! You will give her to us next moon just as you promised. Or else! FoxClan, attack!" He yowled, pouncing at Deathstar. He was then paraded by DeathClan warriors, but Ravenpaw, Frostfoot, and Hornetclaw would not help him. For they knew they would die.

Ravenpaw watched in horror, but he stood still. He was not trained enough to do anything, and he was afraid that if he ran to camp, he would be killed as well.

So all he could do was watch his leaders' demise. Was this it? Was this where Foxstar died? Would Ottercloud become… *Otterstar*?

Chapter Fifteen

"What are you doing!? Attack, FoxClan!" Foxstar yipped, before being scratched across the face by Deathstar. Ravenpaw was too frozen in fear to do anything, and even if he did do something, he did not have nine lives like the leaders to be able to do such brutal battling. And he certainly didn't have enough training.

Hornetclaw looked at him, a panicked look on his face. But Ravenpaw could see something else behind those amber eyes.

"Ravenpaw, you need to get help. We may lose Foxstar." He urged, nudging him away. Ravenpaw turned back, shaking himself off. He looked at Hornetclaw with a brave look on his face, hiding his own fear.

"Hornetclaw…" he muttered. "Do you even care?"

Hornetclaw froze at the comment. His neck fur began to stand on end, and he leaned close to Ravenpaw to whisper, "No, Ravenpaw, I don't. But if we don't do something, we're no better than him."

He had a point. Ravenpaw nodded, running as fast as possible away from them. He wasn't the only one to run. A few DeathClan warriors had seen him run, and played chase. His heart was pounding in his chest, and he himself could hear his own heartbeat. It was almost as if he could feel it ripping itself out of him.

He ran with all his might, but due to being younger and weaker than the warrior, they were slowly catching up to him. Panicking, he could only do one thing if they caught up, and that was fight.

Ravenpaw could feel the wind whipping him in the face as he ran. He could faintly see his own camp in the distance, and it only fueled his determination. He urged himself on. It was life or death now. And life was all that mattered.

That's when Ravenpaw felt teeth clamp down on his tail violently, pulling him back roughly. He turned to see Muddyfoot and her two sons, Leafpaw and Oceanpaw. They didn't even look aggressive. Ravenpaw silently cursed at himself for believing they were some violent warriors behind him. But how were her kits so strong to run so fast?

"Ravenpaw! We've come to help you." Muddyfoot meowed, panting. She was out of breath now from running so fast. "Why did

you run from us?"

Ravenpaw gulped and shrunk away in embarrassment. "I… thought you were someone else." He said hesitantly, his voice faltering. Oceanpaw giggled at him, which made Ravenpaw a bit frustrated with himself.

"What, did you think we were going to kill you? We're not as heartless as Foxstar, you know." Leafpaw laughed as well, letting out a mrrow in amusement.

Ravenpaw nervously laughed as well, hiding his emotions fairly poorly. "Well… yes. I didn't bother to look behind me, I was focused on getting to camp and helping Foxstar, even if it's not the best idea."

Muddyfoot also let out a mrrow, but it was more motherly. "Well, by now Foxstar has probably lost a life. We might lose warriors, so let's hurry and help his mouse-brained fleabag self out." She pointed out, trotting ahead at a nice pace. Ravenpaw, Oceanpaw, and Leafpaw followed behind her, with Ravenpaw still feeling embarrassed.

"So, frog-brain," Oceanpaw mewed, nudging Ravenpaw with his shoulder roughly but playfully. "Why are you so slow?"

Raavenpaw shrugged. He wasn't sure why he was so slow compared to the sleek warriors. Maybe it was his longer, fluffier pelt.

"I'm not sure. I think my pelt is slowing me down. I wish I could cut it down." He responded, still a bit sheepish. He laughed nervously again.

"That sounds like something a kittypet would do," Leafpaw commented. "Be proud of who you are, Ravenpaw. Don't let anyone or anything make you think your thick pelt is a bad thing. You were born with it for a reason. StarClan makes everything happen for a reason."

Ravenpaw nodded, but inside, he sounded a bit surprised that Leafpaw could talk so deeply about a simple pelt. But maybe he was right. StarClan wouldn't have given him such a majestic pelt without reason. But… If everything happens for a reason, why did his mother die? Why did his sister die? Why doesn't he know his father? And why was Voleclaw exiled?

Is Voleclaw destined to stay at DeathClan…?

Soon enough, they made it to the camp. Ravenpaw yowled to the

clan, “FoxClan! Foxstar is under attack! Follow us, we need all the help we can get!”

Only a few cats came out. Finchfeather, Dazzlepaw, Berrytail, and Ottercloud. Where was Flamepaw? He usually loved groveling at Foxstar’s paws. Where was he when they needed him so badly now?

He shook the thought aside. The four cats were better than nothing. Dazzlepaw spoke up, disgust in her voice. “Why are DeathClan cats with you? Are you betraying us? Typical.” She scowled.

“We’ve come to help. We don’t want your leader to die, just as much as we don’t want our own warriors to die. And besides, if we didn’t give chase, a cat who would’ve actually killed Ravenpaw would have. Would you want your leader, Hornetclaw, Frostfoot, AND Ravenpaw to die!?” Muddyfoot screeched at Dazzlepaw, making her flinch.

“...Fine. I’m coming, I’m coming.” She muttered, following them out as they ran to find Foxstar… before it was too late.

But what if it was already too late? What if he was dead? His four lives… just, gone?

But Ravenpaw didn’t have time to think about that now. He had to save Hornetclaw, and to do that, he had to save Foxstar. Unfortunately.

But what if Foxstar was destined to die? Leafpaw had said StarClan makes everything happen for a reason. What was the reason for this?

But when they finally approached, a smell was in the air. Ravenpaw sniffed. Fox! Wait… Fox? Why fox?

That’s when Ravenpaw noticed that Foxstar wasn’t the only battling, but three foxes were: A dark red female, a light ginger male, and a gray, white, and tan, half-blind older male. The entire patrol was shocked. Ravenpaw ran over to Hornetclaw and Frostfoot, urgently speaking in bewilderment.

“What happened??” He asked, panicked. Hornetclaw whipped his head in his direction to look at him, genuine fear in his eyes. “The… Those foxes. I’ve seen them before. When… When Foxstar took over our clan, he used them to kill anyone who tried to fight back.”

Ravenpaw’s jaw dropped. Used FOXES on his side? Was he crazy? Or.. was there more to it?

A lot of the DeathClan warriors were retreating, but Foxstep and

Deathstar were still trying to be defiant. “You fox-heart! Are you trying to kill us, like you did to all of those clans before? Why would you do this to my warriors? Why…?”

Deathstar was bleeding heavily, but so was Foxstar. It was clear that Foxstar had lost a life, and Deathstar most likely did as well, and probably will again.

“Idiot,” Foxstar hissed, not cat-like once more. It made Ravenpaw’s suspicions grow even more. “I have the power of the entire forest on my side. Go, or die.”

With one last hiss, Deathstar and Foxstep fled, with the foxes playing chase. Foxstar cleared his throat. “Well… that was definitely something.”

He noticed Muddyfoot, Oceanpaw, and Leafpaw, and hissed once again. “What are they doing here!?”

Ravenpaw quickly reassured him. “They helped me get the warriors to help you, but I guess it was too late. They were just about to leave. Weren’t you?” He said, glancing at Muddyfoot and her kits. They quickly nodded, running off fast as ever.

Foxstar scoffed, and got in Ravenpaw’s face. “Watch your back. I know you’re planning something. I know you’re plotting against us, traitor.”

Traitor? All he did was help him! StarClan, I thought everything happened for a reason! Why are you doing this to me?

Hello, everybody. Very sorry for not posting, I have been busy with my own mental health, and haven't had motivation. But finally, I have finished a chapter! I hope you guys enjoy. And don't worry, because the book is going to be getting juicy. And the second book is in planning.
Love you all! Stay wild!❤🐾
Oh, and we're two days away from fourth of July, so HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY! (for those who celebrate, of course.)

Chapter Sixteen

Hello everykitty! Writer here! I apologize for not writing much (not like many people read my books, but oh well), I have been really busy cleaning and going places and even transferring to an online school. My school will probably start next week so I will be busy doing work with that.

And besides, I haven't written since… Last month? Seriously, what's wrong with me? I guess I just lost motivation, really. So, please, if there's any tips you can give me so I can continue being motivated to write, please help me out here!

It would be greatly appreciated if anyone could do that. I seriously want to write more but I don't know when or how I can make time. I'm rushing this chapter out as I type so that I can post on here since I've been dead basically. Anyways….

Enjoy!

It had been about a quarter-moon since the battle on the border, and Ravenpaw still had no clue what had even happened. But now, it was starting to grow colder, and everycat knew that soon, Leaf-fall would be here. Which only meant that Leaf-bare was coming as well.

But it made no sense to Ravenpaw, that battle. Where did the foxes come from? And why had a lot of the older, more wise cats seen them before? Who were they, and was Foxstar… One of them?

Now that I think about it, if Foxstar was a fox… everything would make so much sense, thought Ravenpaw. And it did, really. The hisses that weren't even cat-like, his size, his coloring, even his name itself! But why would a fox want to take over a cat clan? And if he was one… how did he understand their language?

It was most likely impossible, and it made less sense if it was. They could never be able to speak the same language as a fox, and never have. What would make Foxstar any different? It was too crazy to even consider now.

"Ravenpaw!" The young tom heard his mentor call out his name. He groaned. He was so lost in his own thoughts he forgot about what he had to do today. And he wasn't even sure what he had to

do, anyway.

Ravenpaw stretched and left his den, heading towards his sleek-furred mentor. “Yes, Hornetclaw?” He asked, sounding as polite as possible.

“Today you will help maintain the camp and reinforce some of the camp's walls. Winterpaw and Dazzlepaw are having their assessments, so you best not bother either of them.” Hornetclaw instructed, whilst Ravenpaw just nodded. *Not like I talk to Dazzlepaw much, anyways. She’s so foxhearted compared to her sister. Winterpaw is so sweet…*

“As I was saying,” Hornetclaw continued, snapping Ravenpaw back to reality once more. “Foxstar also suggests you collect moss for the nests and clean all the dens. He says it’s best for what you did yesterday.”

‘What he did yesterday’? He did nothing! Foxstar was nothing but a power hungry beast, looking for any way to get Ravenpaw in trouble and fuel the curse rumor.

“I’ll get right on it.” Ravenpaw said, dipping his head in respect before trotting away, towards the gorse tunnel and away from everybody else.

His mind was racing, and it wouldn’t stop, even as he collected moss. Why was he being punished like this? He was helping Foxstar!

The only thing he could think of to prevent being punished for doing good… Is not doing any good for him at all.

In fact, he might as well just stop helping Foxstar out. Why listen to him? Why even collect this moss when he could be doing better things like hunting? So that’s what he did. He went out to hunt, but before long, he ran into Dazzlepaw. And unfortunately even ruined one of her catches.

“Fox dung!” She spat, watching as the blackbird flew away with a warning call. She turned to Ravenpaw and scowled. “How am I supposed to do good on my assessment when the curse kitten is wandering around ruining hunts?”

Ravenpaw, on the other paw, did not really care. She kind of deserved it by the way she treated him, anyway. “I’m collecting moss for the nests. Foxstar ordered me to go out and collect some. So unless you’ve got something to say to him, I suggest you shut your muzzle.”

She scoffed, unconvinced. “All the moss you’d collect would

probably be damp." She taunted, flicking her tail in a smug way as if the whole clan was listening to her. "You can never do anything right."

"Oh really?" Ravenpaw asked, tilting his head and having an amused look on his face. "I'm not the one who missed that blackbird. All the prey is messed up because of that warning call, mouse-brain!"

By the look on Dazzlepaw's face, and the silence, he knew he had gotten her. But she would not back down from an argument with him so easily, either. "Yeah, right!" She retorted, letting out a mrrow of laughter. "I would've caught that until you came along!"

"Ah yes Dazzlepaw, jumping to conclusions that I somehow messed her up. Such a foxheart." Ravenpaw said mockingly as he turned tail on her. He saw her flex her claws out the corner of his eye, and he knew that she was beyond frustrated now.

"Hey, don't turn your back on me, Ravenpaw!" She growled, jumping in front of him. "I'll tear you to shreds before you even have any time to react!"

"I would never turn my back on you, Dazzlepaw. Not in a million moons." He said sarcastically. He maintained eye contact with her steadily, before she looked away a few heartbeats later.

"Ugh, you're so annoying! I'm going back to my assessment! And stay out of the way this time!" She trotted off in the opposite direction, making sure she was going the way he wasn't. For a moment he wanted to follow her and mess up her hunt again, but he knew he'd get in trouble. Her mentor, Finchfeather, would definitely report this to Foxstar and get him in greater trouble than he already was.

But he didn't really care anymore. Foxstar would most likely be getting tired of him, and he'd end up like Voleclaw. Or maybe someone else, but he couldn't think of other stories as he collected moss. But then he remembered one: Lionfern.

Everyone had said he had supposedly been killed by a badger while he and Foxstar had been having a conversation about that upcoming leaf-bare. In fact, he himself had been born a moon after that during leaf-bare. Now it was probably only a few moons before he became a warrior.

Not soon enough, he thought grimly. *I don't want to be stuck as an apprentice longer than necessary. But I know that'll happen.*

There was too much that needed to happen. FoxClan needed more

kits, that was for sure. He had heard a rumor that Finchfeather was expecting kits, but he wasn't sure if it was believable. Besides, she didn't seem like the type to want kits, anyway.

But for now, the main focus was collecting moss, cleaning the dens, and maintaining the camp.

For the rest of the evening, until sunset, Ravenpaw had been busy. He had been so caught up with stuff he hadn't had a chance to eat, but that was probably Foxstar's plan anyway. So once he finished patching some of the camp's walls, he padded up to the fresh-kill pile. He picked up a squirrel among the prey, but the chunk he grabbed ripped off. As the squirrel fell, he saw the rotten, maggot-eaten flesh. He dropped the meat, eyes wide, as he backed up a bit. Who would put crow-food in the fresh-kill?

What idiot wasn't paying attention? He almost ate that! But there's no way that was important, but… He had a feeling that the squirrel meant something. After all, the medicine cat was named Squirrelfrost. Was it an... omen?

If it was, why would he get it? He wasn't a medicine cat, or a special cat in general. He was just a hated cat with a curse rumor he had to fix. It probably wasn't important.

So he grabbed a different piece of prey, this time a rabbit, and began to eat it. The stench of the crow-food was disgusting, so he decided to move away. He wasn't going to bother burying it, as he was too hungry to care.

As he finished his rabbit, he heard the voice of Squirrelfrost speak up loudly: "Crow-food? Foxstar, what is the meaning of this? Are you trying to kill me?" He demanded, as his clouded, blind blue eyes stared into Foxstar's soul. He pushed the prey towards him.

"No, Squirrelfrost. I'm not." Foxstar defended quickly. "Someone has already taken a bite of that, but it hasn't been eaten."

Suddenly, as Ravenpaw looked over, he could see something flash within Squirrelfrost's eyes. He thought he'd say something, but he didn't. Instead, he flicked his tail and walked back to his den, acting unphased. Clearly he wasn't, though.

Foxstar scowled and jumped onto the highrock. "Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather here at the highrock for a clan meeting!" He yowled, and Ravenpaw immediately knew what was happening: It was time for Dazlepaw and Winterpaw to become

warriors.

Now Ravenpaw would be stuck in the apprentices' den with only Flamepaw, the arrogant foxheart.

All the cats began to gather, with Dazzlepaw and Winterpaw sitting up front with Ottercloud and Finchfeather, their mentors.

"Dazzlepaw and Winterpaw have completed their warrior assessments today," began Foxstar, looking slightly impatient and annoyed, but slightly proud as well. "Their mentors have told me that they did very well, despite a few obstacles."

Ravenpaw saw Foxstar glance at him, and knew he was talking about him. Nobody else seemed to notice, though.

"I, Foxstar, leader and founder of FoxClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down upon these apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend them to you as a warrior in their turn. Dazzlepaw, Winterpaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code, and protect and defend this Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

Dazzlepaw and Winterpaw both nodded solemnly. "I do." They both said, almost lined up perfectly.

"Then by the power of StarClan, I give you your warrior names. Winterpaw, from this moment forward, you will be known as Winterstone. StarClan honors your courage and loyalty, and we welcome you as a full member of FoxClan."

"And Dazzlepaw, from this moment forward, you will be known as Dazzleheart. StarClan honors your determination and braveness. We welcome you as a full member of FoxClan." Foxstar finally finished, and everyone was calling out their names.

"Dazzleheart! Winterstone! Dazzleheart! Winterstone!"

And now, it would only be a moment of time before Ravenpaw gained his warrior name. But it worried him to think… Will he even *live* to see that day?

Chapter Seventeen

Ravenpaw had gone to bed that night after Dazzleheart and Winterstone became warriors. Now, the apprentice den was basically empty. But fortunately, Finchfeather had moved to the nursery as well. She was expecting kits, but had been holding back for her apprentice.

And Finchfeather wasn't the only one who was soon having kits. Ravenpaw had overheard that Ottercloud was planning future kits as well, which means they would need a temporary new deputy until she was done nursing. Ottercloud's kits were slightly visible, and you could tell they were forming, but Finchfeather would probably pop within a quarter-moon.

And Voleclaw's kits? Well, Ravenpaw had not heard about them for quite a while now, and he wondered if she was finally safe. He knew that Foxstar would risk his life to take back his former deputy, for the kits are all he wanted in his clan.

But at the same time, Ravenpaw knew that it would be awhile before Finchfeather and Ottercloud's kits became apprentices. He would be well a warrior by then. But Voleclaw might even join FoxClan again and actually bring her kits with her. But… what if she was dead? *No, that's not possible*, Ravenpaw thought doubtfully. *DeathClan doesn't kill. They have decency*.

After a long dusk of thinking, as the moon glowed in the sky, Ravenpaw finally fell into a deep sleep.

Ravenpaw woke within what looked like to be DeathClan territory. Confused, he padded forward, looking for cats. Then, he noticed the FoxClan border, near the river. He padded alongside it, thinking this was the way to go.

Before long, he heard voices, angry and loud. One of them was familiar: Lionfern, from his first dream with StarClan.

What was he saying? And who was the other cat? He padded forwards once more, intending to find out more.

Then, he saw them: Lionfern, and… Foxstar? He could hear a few things coming from Lionfern now, as he was within earshot. "Are you even listening to me? We aren't going to survive this leaf-bare,

the twolegs that came before us scared most of the prey off!”

Foxstar seemed unbothered. What was happening? Was this before Lionfern died? A memory of the great deputy before the badger incident?

“I’m sure the prey will come back. Besides, we don’t own just one territory, we own two. Remember? We have DreamClan territory AND SunClan, Lionfern.” Foxstar spoke coolly, but Ravenpaw could see him flexing his long, sharp claws.

Foxstar, that doesn’t matter! We don’t know if the twolegs had poisoned the river! I know you’re hiding something! And I’m not the only one here.” Lionfern suddenly glanced at Ravenpaw- no, *through* him. Like a ghost, an imaginary cat who once existed and now did not.

Foxstar looked behind them and, not only Lionfern now, but both of them were just… *looking through him.*

Foxstar growled loudly like no cat had before. It sounded… odd. Like something he didn’t expect from him. “How dare you listen in on our private conversation, apprentice? You’ll end out just like *him*!”

Suddenly, Foxstar pounced on Ravenpaw, and he finally felt how strong the tom truly was. It was almost too strong, something that made him uneasy. Was this real? Was this the actual Foxstar about to kill him in a dream?

Just as Foxstar went to do a killing rip to his throat, Ravenpaw’s sight went black. He saw nothing more than darkness, before suddenly, he saw the moon glowing over a cat: Lionfern. His dead body lying on the ground. Ravenpaw could see a rip within his throat, just like Foxstar had been about to do to him.

“Oh, Ravenpaw, I’m so sorry, my baby…” He heard the soft, slightly familiar voice of a kindhearted she-cat he once knew, but did not fully remember anymore. “You weren’t supposed to see this.” Then it hit him.

Ravenpaw’s throat tightened. “...Mother?” He heaved, shock and sadness in his voice. He could not see her, but he wished he could.

“Yes…” The soft voice murmured. “Forgive me, for I have not been the mother I could have been, thanks to… That *foxheart*.” she spat the last word with disdain, venom in her tone. “If you would have seen it… You would know, my sweet, sweet kit…”

Ravenpaw was frozen in shock for a few moments, before he forced himself to move. He luckily could, padding silently towards

the cold body of Lionfern, the once mighty deputy o FoxClan.

Then… he saw it. Red-orange fur stuck between his claws, like he had fought something more than a badger. He recognized the fur instantly. *Foxstar*. A badger did not kill Lionfern, it had been Foxstar himself. But why? Why would he need to kill the amazing deputy he had? Did he disobey him, just like Voleclaw?

Ravenpaw awoke with a start, jolting in his nest. He blinked his eyes at the sunlight, remembering his dream more clearly than he ever did any other dream. That night, he had learned something that nobody else knew: Lionfern was not killed by a badger. In fact, he was killed by his own leader.

Chapter Eighteen

Ravenpaw had gone battle training with Flamepaw that morning, but he couldn't shake the feeling of dread he had from his dream. After finally finding out about the true reason of Lionfern's death, what would he do with such information? Who would he share it to? Nocat?

Whatever he was supposed to do with it, he had to find out. And soon, before Foxstar's treachery led the clan into more brutal wars and unnecessary deaths.

Ravenpaw had also finally found out that Sorrelheart had given birth to her kits, but that was moons ago. He had just seen them in camp, and he had been wondering about that. He was kind of used to not being told about things in camp, but entire kits? He had no clue.

Sorrelheart ended up having two kits: Specklekit, a pretty, shortfurred (and short-tempered) she-kit, and Lostkit, a she-kit with… no fur at all.

She had been talking about the kit for moons, and now the kit was old enough to walk around the camp freely under supervision. Her hairless skin was pink and slightly wrinkly, with a few hairs here and there.

How would the kit survive one leaf-bare? It was already getting cold, and they could tell the kit was going to get sick. They had never seen such a thing. Was the father a kittypet?

Sorrelheart had not shared who the father was, so it was actually a possibility. There was no way that such a kit could survive the harsh snows of leaf-bare. If anything, she would be no use to the clan. If she hunted in greenleaf, the sun would easily scorch her skin. If she hunted during leaf-bare, the snow would freeze her to death. The only acceptable role would be… a medicine cat.

And now, Ravenpaw wondered… What about Voleclaw's kits? Now that he thought about it, they would be very helpful to the clan, but also helpful to DeathClan. But was Foxstar willing to keep them, or would he kill them? Would he kill Lostkit?

Ravenpaw considered visiting DeathClan. Maybe he could even reconcile with Deathstar about whether they should keep the kits or

not. Who was the father even? Was it a DeathClan cat, and that's why they wanted to keep her and her kits there?

Whatever the reason, he had to know. He decided that he would tell Hornetclaw that he would hunt, but instead, he would go and visit.

"Hornetclaw!" Ravenpaw called out in the warriors' den. Hornetclaw perked up and glanced at him. He had been sharing tongues with Winterstone, while having a conversation. "Yes, Ravenpaw?" He asked curiously.

"I'm going to go and hunt by myself." Ravenpaw told him.

"Are you sure? You're not tired from the battle training this morning?" He seemed surprised that he was eager to hunt, but Hornetclaw knew better than to question him and his determination to feed the clan and prove loyalty constantly. Except that was not the reason.

"Nope! Not tired at all. In fact, I'm feeling energetic for once!" Ravenpaw said. Without another word, he trotted away towards the gorse tunnel. He exited without questions and climbed up the ravine.

As he trotted towards the thunderpath, which led to DeathClan's main territory, he couldn't help but wonder if he had done the right thing leaving FoxClan territory to an enemy clan alone. What if he was killed? Denied seeing his former clanmate and her kits, and instead, chased away and getting in even more trouble than he already was getting in?

But there was only one way to find out, and that was by just risking it and going to DeathClan. But if he was caught…

Ravenpaw trotted through his territory, passing by his own well-known personal landmarks, before arriving at the Thunderpath. He had only ever crossed it once, and that was a DeathClan reason as well. But now? Now he was alone, struggling to remember the rules of crossing.

He looks left and right multiple times, shaking slightly at the thought of this ending terribly wrong. He sniffed the air, and when he knew it was safe, he ran across as fast as he could.

He didn't bother to wait for a patrol. He thought that going straight to their camp would be the best solution, since waiting for a patrol could mean he could be seen by one of his own warriors from his own clan.

As he padded through the unfamiliar territory silently, he smelt

strange smells everywhere. Some familiar cats like Muddyfoot or Foxstep, who had been there recently. Others… musky. A scent of dusty, unkept cats traveling through.

Suddenly Ravenpaw scented something more, and heard footsteps. Small, unsteady ones. He realized with a jolt he was being followed by his own clan members, Lostkit and Specklekit.

Ravenpaw turned around, irritation flaring inside him. He saw the two she-kits shrink at his glare. “What are you doing out of camp?” he demanded.

“We tested our scents!” Specklekit tried to say proudly, her chest puffing up in a small hint of pride. “Why are you in DeathClan territory?” She questioned.

“I was looking to talk to Deathstar about Voleclaw and her kits! It’s none of your business!” Ravenpaw retorted, getting impatient. Why was the hairless kit out of camp? Wasn’t it cold for her?

But Lostkit didn’t seem slightly bothered by the cold, only by his tone. “We’re sorry.” She murmured, but Specklekit nudged her. “No we’re not! We’re coming with you to DeathClan camp!”

“No!” Ravenpaw snapped, growling. “Go back to camp! It’s dangerous here! You’re supposed to stay within the camp, not out of it! Do you know how much trouble I could get into if they thought I took kits out of camp to DeathClan?”

Specklekit groaned, shifting her paws. “Fine…” She grumbled, turning away. “Come on, Lostkit. Let’s go.”

“And don’t you dare go around the camp telling everyone. This was supposed to be a secret mission between me and Foxstar.” But only Ravenpaw knew that was a lie. Realistically, nobody knew he was this far into enemy territory. He would be crow-food!

He watched with relief as the kits left silently without another protest. Ravenpaw didn’t bother to follow them, but he heard more footsteps up ahead, rustling the thorny, spikey bushes.

Ravenpaw let out a breath of relief as he recognized Bananapaw, with a bundle of herbs in her mouth. She seemed surprised he was here, but not unfriendly.

“Hello, Ravenpaw. What are you doing here?” She asked, setting the herbs down.

“I’m here to see your leader about Voleclaw. And don’t worry, I’m alone.” he said, adding a reassuring comment to the end of his sentence. She didn’t protest, picking up her herbs and leading him towards their camp.

As they arrived, several cats looked annoyed. One, a blue-gray, muscular and scarred tom, commented, “What could Foxstar’s curse of an apprentice possibly want this time?” while Muddyfoot shushed him.

“What is the meaning of this?” Deathstar asked as he padded up to them. He had been talking to some senior warriors as they had walked into camp.

“I’ve come to ask about Voleclaw, that’s all. Is she well?” Ravenpaw asked calmly, making sure he knew that he meant no harm. He actually cared for her.

Deathstar sighed. “Yes, she is well. You may go see her, she is in the nursery now.” he nodded towards a large, cozy looking den, and Ravenpaw nodded respectfully before heading that way.

As he nudged his way into the den, he saw Voleclaw licking and motherly cleaning three healthy kits. One was a beautiful rich brown tabby she-kit, another was a mostly ginger with some white she-kit, and the other was a dark ginger tabby tom.

“Hello, Voleclaw.” Ravenpaw greeted, dipping his head. She looked surprised to see him, of all people. “Why, hello, Ravenpaw. Come to see the kits?”

“Yes, and you.” he answered. “How are they?”

“We’re fine! Go away!” The dark ginger tom scowled. Voleclaw shushed him. “Quiet, Foxkit. I’m the adult here, not you. Now, you, Hazelkit, and Honeykit can go play, okay?”

“Okay…” Foxkit, the dark ginger tom, grumbled, trotting away with his two sisters.

“Has Foxstar decided he wants to kill his kin?” Voleclaw asked, now sounding tired. *These are Foxstar’s kits?* Ravenpaw thought. *Or… are they Foxstep’s?*

“No, I wanted to make sure you were safe.” He simply replied.

“They’ll never be safe with their father around,” she sighed. Then she said something he never thought she would. “I want you to know that if I die… Your mother and sister will never forgive me for what I had done to them for the sake of my own life.”

Ravenpaw was confused. “What did you do?” he asked, getting concerned.

“I killed them. Foxstar’s rules. I’m sorry, Ravenpaw.”

She killed my mother and sister? How could she!?

Chapter Nineteen

Ravenpaw had gone home after he had met with Voleclaw, Foxkit, Honeykit, and Hazelkit, her kin. Now, he was shocked by what he had discovered. Voleclaw, the rude but caring former deputy of FoxClan, had killed his own kin. He had thought that Voleclaw had at least some sympathy for him, but she had ended up to be one of the main causes for him to be alone in his struggles.

What do I do now? He thought helplessly. *My mother and sister were killed by my own clanmate, and I don't know my father. Could it be Foxstar? Or Nightflame, the cat I had met in my own dreams?*

It did not make a bit of sense to him. Sure, there was a chance Nightflame was his father, but he probably would have said so in the dream he had so long ago. Maybe his father, his own kin, was closer than he thought he was.

A DeathClan warrior, maybe? Anything was possible. He had no clues, no hints on who it could be.

As Ravenpaw arrived back at camp, Squirrelfrost was scrabbling around the camp with herbs. He rushed into the nursery, and Ravenpaw could guess that it was time for Finchfeather's kits to be born.

He had never witnessed anything like this before. He had never even been around when kits were born. Ravenpaw's stomach suddenly sunk as he realized he forgot to actually hunt like he said he would. And now, Foxstar was watching him expectantly.

He had no right to lie. He walked up to Foxstar and spoke, slightly shaky with his own voice. "Foxstar, May I... speak to you? I have some news to share that I think you'll find quite useful."

"What is the meaning of this?" Foxstar demanded as he glared down at the apprentice. Ravenpaw realized with a jolt that he was no longer so small compared to Foxstar. Soon, he would become a warrior. "Why weren't you hunting?"

"I have heard about Voleclaw from a DeathClan patrol I passed," He lied quickly to Foxstar. "She had three kits: Foxkit, Honeykit, and Hazelkit. Two she-kits and one tom."

"So she named one after me?" Foxstar pondered the tom's name like it was some sort of treasure. "How thoughtful. I'll have to think

about that when I kill her."
"What!? You can't be serious, Foxstar!" Ravenpaw protested, bristling. "She's still nursing those poor kits! Are you mad?"
Foxstar growled at his puny defense for the she-cat. "My word is law, Ravenpaw. We will strike DeathClan tonight!" He suddenly yowled, climbing on top of the Highrock. Ravenpaw realized grimly that he should have kept the kits a secret.
Those are his kin! Could he really do such a thing?

"What kind of trouble did you cause now, cursepaw?" Grumbled Dazzleheart as she stared up at Foxstar, slight disbelief in her eyes. Like she cared about Voleclaw and those kits. But Ravenpaw remembered those were her siblings, and her mother, along with Winterstone's. They would fight for their life.
"I didn't mean to," Ravenpaw mumbled, looking down at his paws in guilt and shame. Now, Foxstar would not stop until Voleclaw was dead. But why? There was no use in trying so hard to kill the cat he once loved.
"Well, you've really done it now, haven't you?" She growled. He saw Winterstone shoot him a sympathetic glance, but it didn't help.
All I've done is try to help them, but now, I've made it worse!
Soon, Foxstar was leading multiple warriors and apprentices towards the DeathClan camp. It was night now, with the moon shining in the sky brightly. It was almost a full moon, and they were causing a battle. What would this do to the meeting?
"I know how guilty you must feel, Ravenpaw," Winterstone suddenly said softly, falling into stride beside him. "I don't blame you."
"She might die because of me!" Ravenpaw silently wailed. "What have I done?"
Winterstone nuzzled his cheek, and for once he felt safe in one of his harder times. "It's okay, we all make mistakes. We learn to forgive and forget, no matter what happens."
Ravenpaw slightly calmed at her touch. Him and Winterstone had always been close, even when he felt no cat cared for him. In the end, she was one of the only friends she had. He couldn't let her kin die, no matter the cost. Even his own life.
"We must cross the thunderpath," Foxstar announced at the head of the patrol, looking back at his warriors as he came to a stop. "Who wants to go first?"

One by one, each warrior crossed. Soon, it was Ravenpaw's turn to cross. He was hesitant at first. After seeing what happened to Winterstone, and her being so close to death, he was almost sure StarClan would not even be able to guarantee that he would not be the next.
"You're fine, Ravenpaw," growled Berrytail. "Just go. Not all of us can wait."
Ravenpaw bristled at the snarky comment, and he knew he mustn't stall any further. He looked left and right, checking for monsters, sniffing the air. Then, he ran. He ran so fast he didn't even notice the speed he had crossed at.
"Calm down, Ravenpaw!" Called Winterstone from the back of the group of cats as he made it to the other side. "Don't tire yourself out before the battle even begins!"
"Yeah, Ravenpaw." Mocked Dazzleheart. Ravenpaw rolled his eyes at yet another comment. He was supposed to be used to it by now, and yet it still irritated him. "Don't tire out your little paws!"
"I agree!" Said another familiar voice that he had not heard with them beforehand. They all turned to see Specklekit trotting across the thunderpath. "You need the energy if you are to kill a powerful cat like Voleclaw!"
"What are you doing here?" Snarled Foxstar, facing the brave little she-kit as she made it to the other side. "You're a kit, not a warrior! Go back to camp!"
"No!" Specklekit whipped her head in his direction, a smug, defiant look in her eyes. "I'm coming too!"
Specklekit trotted onward into DeathClan. She, surprisingly, disappeared quickly into the territory, and Ravenpaw couldn't help but to follow her to make sure she'd be alright. And possibly send her back to FoxClan.
"Stop! I'm the leader, not a kit!" Yowled Foxstar furiously, tail lashing as he followed them as well. Ravenpaw ignored him.
"Specklekit!" Ravenpaw called to her, getting worried. "Please get back to camp! You're far too young to battle big cats!"
"I'm not small! I'm plenty big!" Specklekit growled, before suddenly... She was faced by the deputy of DeathClan himself.
"A kit? How lovely. And a patrol to come for the kit too? Even better." Foxstep growled menacingly at her, and she shrunk back in pure terror.
"Does FoxClan not know how to care for their own kits properly?"

Commented another warrior that Ravenpaw recognized as Lakefoot. His blue-gray pelt shone in the moonhigh light. "We heard you from our camp!" He sneered.
Another cat, a calico she-cat with dazzling diamond blue eyes, whipped her head up to glare down at the cats. She was unreasonably large for a she. "Ah, trespassers. How lovely for Foxstar to break his own code. Shall we shred them, Foxstep?"
"You're outnumbered, Foxstep. We'll rip you to shreds before you do us!" Foxstar challenged, standing beside his warriors with a fearless glare.
Suddenly more cats joined them. Ravenpaw recognized cats like Oakpaw, Dusttail, Muddyfoot, Webwhisker, even Deathstar himself.
"Are you sure about that?" Foxstep taunted, a fuzzy brow raised.
"We speak for this forest in our ancestors of StarClan, for you shall not lay a paw on Voleclaw," Deathstar meowed loudly, taking a challenging step to stand beside Foxstep. "And by the power of StarClan: DeathClan, attack!"

Chapter Twenty

Ravenpaw was launched into battle before he knew it. He didn't have time to react before Webwhisker launched himself at him, fastening his teeth into his shoulder.

"Mrrow-ow-ow!" He yowled, slashing him across the face with his claws outstretched. Webwhisker did not let go so easily. "Curse! You betray everyone who lays a mousetail of trust on you!"

Ravenpaw twisted and kicked his back paws across Webwhisker wherever he could, digging deep into his hind legs and tail. Finally, he let go, growled, and ran away. Ravenpaw looked around the clearing, only to spot Muddyfoot trying to rip open Winterstone.

Ravenpaw's paws moved faster than they ever had before. He pounced on her, claws sheathed this time, to knock her off.

"Ravenpaw!" She gasped, spitting out a bit of Winterstone's blood. She turned to him, but did not attack. "Don't lay a paw on her," He growled, though not completely full of hatred. More full of sadness and regret.

Muddyfoot stared at him for several heartbeats. For a moment, Ravenpaw thought he saw her flex her claws in irritation. But instead, she just walked off and pounced on Berrytail instead.

"Thanks?" Winterstone said questioningly. Ravenpaw huffed. "It's no problem."

Ravenpaw looked around, seeing the bloodshed of the unnecessary battle. He was still thinking about what Webwhisker had said. *I'm no curse*! Thought Ravenpaw angrily. *They all keep lying to themselves! I'm something they never will be!*

But Ravenpaw wasn't sure if that was so true. That's when he heard a small yowl, specifically from the young she-kit: Specklekit.

No! Ravenpaw realized with a jolt that someone was trying to steal the poor kit. He looked around wildly, and noticed Foxstep holding her in his jaws, walking away smugly.

Ravenpaw raced at him bravely. He would not let this foxheart steal this innocent kit! He pounced on the DeathClan deputy, digging his claws into the cat's shoulders fiercely. "Let her go!" He yowled.

Foxstep screeched in rage, but he did not let the kit go. He jumped

onto his back, crushing Ravenpaw. He let go, but was not ready to let him take her. “Have you no honor? She’s just a reckless kit, always has been! Leave her alone!”

“Yeah, mouse-brain! You can’t just-” Ravenpaw quickly shushed her with one single glare. She stared at him indignantly, growling slightly in defiance. But Ravenpaw ignored her and stood his ground.

“She’s in my territory, so she’s ours! Voleclaw can nurse her.” Foxstep argued smugly, smirking. Ravenpaw was not having this. He launched himself at Foxstep, digging his claws into his enemy’s eyes.

Foxstep screeched in pain and dropped the kit. Ravenpaw dug his claws as far in as possible, hoping to blind his opponent before soon being thrown off. Foxstep ran away, stumbling blindly as his eyes bled out a small stream of blood as he ran.

Serves him right, Ravenpaw thought furiously. *Maybe I’ll become a warrior now!*

But as DeathClan fled, and Ravenpaw picked up Specklekit to take her home, he noticed Foxstar coughing on the ground.

Berrytail crouched beside him, a worried look etched on his face. “Foxstar, are you alright?” He asked, concerned.

“I’m fine, Berrytail. Have you forgotten how strong I truly am?” He grumbled, staggering as he stood up. “Come on, FoxClan. We will come back for the kits soon, whether they like it or not.”

But as they left, Ravenpaw couldn’t help but wonder what DeathClan would do to him after he had blinded their beloved deputy. Would they never trust him again? They had put all their trust on him, and he ruined it. Now they would hate him, no matter what he did.

What’s done is done. He shouldn’t have touched our kits. Foxkit, Hazelkit, and Honeykit, you’re coming home, trust me.

“I’m fine momma! Really!” Whined Specklekit to her mother, Sorrelheart, as she licked the she-kit vigorously. Lostkit was inside the nursery, safe and sound. For now.

Ravenpaw watched as Foxstar followed Squirrelfrost into the medicine den longingly. He only could hope that soon he would become a warrior, for he was getting too big for the apprentice den.

“Specklekit, you mouse-brain!” Sorrelheart suddenly snapped. “You could’ve gotten killed by them!” She crouched down to be

face-to-face with her, narrowing her eyes seriously.

Specklekit groaned. Clearly she didn't understand the trouble she was in. "Momma!" She whined, pawing her own mother's face away. "I can take care of myself!"

"You're far too small for that, young one." Called Finchfeather from the nursery, her one surviving kit clinging to her belly like a life support. "Even Frogkit agrees, even if she can't say it."

Specklekit rolled her eyes in annoyance. "You're not my mother! And Frogkit doesn't even know what we're saying!" She retorted, turning tail and stomping away furiously. Sorrelheart sighed.

"One of these days, Foxstar is going to kill her like Beekit…" Ravenpaw heard her mutter, and with a jolt he realized who she was talking about. She was talking about Ravenpaw's littermate, the one who had been killed by Voleclaw as Foxstar's rules. Did they really remember her? Even after all this time?

And why would they want to remember her? Wasn't his whole family cursed? It didn't make sense to him. If Ravenpaw was seen as a curse, and they killed his mother Shiningflower, and sister Beekit for it, why would they bother to remind themselves of it? Or even bother to care about them? Or him?

Ravenpaw decided he wanted to hear more about the conversation between Finchfeather and Sorrelheart. He stalked into a bush nearby, crouching and pricking up his ears to listen. He even swiveled his ears in their direction for even better hearing about it.

"But Beekit was cursed. Just like Ravenpaw and Shiningflower, remember?" Finchfeather protested rather harshly, hissing under her breath at the thought.

"Do you really believe such kit tales?" Sorrelheart said softly, glancing over her shoulder to check if anyone was listening. She even glanced towards Hornetclaw in the process. Why Hornetclaw?

Finchfeather shrugged. "I don't know. Foxstar would never lie about the word of StarClan, would he?"

"I don't think he's selfless enough to care about anyone, including StarClan. I wouldn't doubt it, honestly." Sorrelheart sighed, her shoulders slumping in defeat. She had no more words left to defend him.

"I have a feeling you're being delirious." muttered Finchfeather as she rolled her eyes like Specklekit. "Foxstar has never lied!"

"Are you so sure about that?" Sorrelheart said, looking up from her own paws. She looked as serious as ever. Finchfeather was a bit

intimidated.

She shrugged again, trying to act as nonchalant as possible. Sorrelheart growled. “See? You follow him with no faith. StarClan will not light the path of a foul, foxhearted warrior such as him. What is wrong with you?”

Finchfeather flinched back a bit, her kit following her in confusion. “I-I don’t know, Sorrelheart. I don’t know…”

So I’m not the only one who thinks the curse is fake? Ravenpaw thought with a sudden spark of hope. *I know that curse is fake. But how can I prove that Foxstar is more than what they think he is?*

Chapter Twenty One

Ravenpaw had struggled to sleep that night, the scratches from the battle still stinging him. Even after he had gone to see Squirrelfrost, he knew that they would hurt for quite some time. But that wasn't the only thing troubling him.

He needed to learn more about Lionfern's death. But how? Nobody had found out the true treachery about it besides him. Should he call him out?

No, he would be killed if he told anyone. Then he remembered what Squirrelfrost had said to him moons ago: That he was meant for something greater, and that he should tell no cat what he knows. So that was it? He had to keep Lionfern's death a secret forever? But if he did that, how would every cat find out about Foxstar's true treachery, and most importantly, stop him?

Was Squirrelfrost wrong this whole time? Should he tell someone?

But who? And more importantly, if someone did know, what would they do with that information? And… Was Ottercloud really meant to be Otter*star*? Or, was someone else meant to be the leader?

Would Ravenpaw have to kill her?

"Ravenpaw!" With a jolt he got up as his mentor, Hornetclaw, called his name. He stretched in his next beforehand. "Yes?"

"Today is the day, Ravenpaw! Your warrior assessment!" Hornetclaw nuzzled him on the cheek, purring loudly as if he was his own father. They had always been close like that, but was he really ready for this? Especially under Foxstar's judgemental gaze?

Hornetclaw became serious as he saw the look he got from Foxstar. The one telling he was acting kittish. "Alright, Ravenpaw. You are going to hunt as best as you can, and I will be watching you. Always. And by the end of this, you can finally become the warrior you were destined to be."

"Yes, Hornetclaw. I will do my best!" Ravenpaw meowed confidently, puffing up his chest with excitement and pride. But he was shaking in fear of Foxstar planning something to do to him while he was mostly unwatched.

Ravenpaw didn't worry much after that. He hunted with

confidence, catching many different types of prey to the best of his ability. He missed a squirrel and a bird or two, but caught several things to make up for it. Even in Leaf-fall, he was having the best of luck so far. He had only caught two mice, a blackbird, and a vole, before he heard larger rustling in the bushes.

At first, he thought it was Hornetclaw, so he ignored it and continued searching for prey. Only when the loud scattering of leaves and heavy pawsteps rushing towards him got louder did he turn towards the sound rather quickly.

Before he knew it, a flash of red pounced on him, and with a shiver he realized. *Foxstar*! He thought with rage. I *just knew the leader would kill me while I was alone! Now the whole clan will never know where I went! StarClan, help me!*

Ravenpaw raked his claws into Foxstar's stomach, slicing him open roughly whether Foxstar was using claws or not. With that, he was able to push him off. Foxstar stared at him with the hatred he had seen multiple times. "Time to die, curse. Let's see what you're really made of!" He pounced again, but Ravenpaw quickly moved out of the way and raked his claws down his side harshly.

Foxstar yowled in fury, twisting and clamping his powerful jaws down on Ravenpaw's tail. He didn't even flinch, knowing that Foxstar had never had good battle tactics and just went for any move possible. It barely hurt, but it didn't just not hurt at all.

"Fool!" Foxstar snapped, letting go and snapping at his hind leg. "You haven't seen the best of me!" Suddenly, a blur of fur knocked Foxstar over.

Winterstone! Ravenpaw gasped. She ripped at him and even clawed his eye, making him yowl. Ravenpaw joined her, for once united with cats within his own clan to stop the madness of this cat.

Finally, after many injuries between the three cats, Foxstar staggered away from them, panting. "I see you're smarter than I truly thought. This was merely a test." He breathed, his chest heaving.

"Was Lionfern a test too? Was the curse a test?" Ravenpaw snapped, furious. He had too much pride to stop himself from letting out his thoughts now. "Or do you kill because you need to hide your secrets?"

Foxstar froze. "You know about that…?" He muttered carefully and lowly, now surprised. "How?"

"That's my own information. For I have the power of StarClan by

my side, and you won't dare hurt a cat within this clan for a long time. I could drop your secrets and overpower you." Ravenpaw hissed in Foxstar's ear, out of earshot from Winterstone, who tilted her head in confusion.

Puzzled, she spoke. "What are you hissing over there?"

"Nothing. This is over. Let's go back to camp." Foxstar heaved himself off the ground and stalked away, his muscles pulsing. Ravenpaw was shocked. How did he just beat him in a battle?

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather around for a clan meeting!" Foxstar called from the Highrock, and Ravenpaw knew what was happening now. It was finally time! He sat in front, with Hornetclaw looking surprised to do the same.

"Today is the day that a cat I have wronged so many times gets put straight," Foxstar began, staring down at Ravenpaw with an unreadable face.

"For Ravenpaw has proven he deserves a warrior name, regardless of curse or not. For the curse must be fake, or maybe just let go. Ravenpaw has great times coming for him." But Ravenpaw could tell he wasn't fully telling the truth as much as many other cats.

"I, Foxstar, leader and founder of FoxClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down upon this apprentice. For he has shown his worth of the warrior code and earned so much respect. Ravenpaw, do you promise to uphold the code and protect your clan, even with your life?"

"I do." Ravenpaw dipped his head in respect. Even after just battling this treacherous cat so many times and having so many disagreements, he knew this was a pure honor.

"Then by the power of StarClan, I give you your warrior name. From now on, you will be known as Ravenwing. StarClan honors your bravery and loyalty."

But Ravenwing knew now that his battle was still not over. He had a lot to do as a full fledged warrior now. *A darkened tom shall rise from shadows deep, to unmask a hidden traitor and restore clan peace.*

End of book one.

Author's Note

That was the end of book one! I wasn't very good with writing, but you can tell my writing is improving! Now, I'd like to say that I will start book two as soon as possible. Tonight I will draw the cover and the allegiances and prologue should be out by this week.

Now that I'm drawing the covers with a mixture of realism and cartoonism, who should be on it? I'm thinking of Ottercloud, but the other choices include Winterstone, Foxstar, or even Hornetclaw. But Hornetclaw would not be the best choice, as the book will be very focused on the first three.

This book was something I had never ever expected to finish, but here I am going to start book two of a series that has grown so much on me. I can't believe I finished this amazing book without cancelling it. Amazing for me, it's a great milestone.

This is the fourth time I had rewritten this book. The second and third times, I had cancelled it, while the first book of this, Ravenstar's Wish, was too nostalgic to delete. It is still up to this day, but very out of date.

The book is also very short and cringey, but if you'd like to see where this book originated, go ahead and read it! It'll be on my profile all the time until I finally decide to clear it, which will not be any time soon.

Thank you so much for supporting this! See you all in book two.
<3
Ivy Harper

Additional note

Hello everycat! Now, I know this book is complete, but I have looked back at it and realized that multiple mistakes were made in the process of writing this action-packed book. With that said, once I have the chance, I will most likely have to do a partial rewrite of this book to fix any mistakes, along with the second one.

I had absolutely no notes on anything happening, and in fact, the second book forgot about many details. which includes some of the following

Voleclaw having a hairless kit (Which has already been removed I believe)

Voleclaw's kits being Foxstep's instead of Foxstar's

Specklekit and Lostkit being Sorrelheart's kits and not Finchfeather's.

and I completely forgot about Frogkit entirely.

Now, I haven't been rereading through this entire thing yet, but when I find the chance to, I will fix any and all mistakes I find. I now have notes on the second book to this, but I can only do so much since I get so busy with helping out family members who sometimes can't help themselves.

I myself am also disabled (not the kind of disability in a wheelchair, though I may get there and be in one), so taking care of other disabled family members while everyone else cannot is an intense struggle for me.

Add school, writing, working on posts about my book to make it

gain popularity, taking care of a fish, and multiple chores, I get pretty busy. Sometimes I just don't want to do anything productive so I play a game or doom scroll, or even just read. Life is hard for me as I try to post on my books to an extent.

In fact, I may not even get to fixing this book for a long while. I could leave it the way it is now, but what would that do to the future of my books? Would it make them worse?

Regardless of what I do with this book, I still put my all into it despite not knowing what to actually do half the time. I'm not an expert writer, I'm more of an amateur, but I'll learn and soon the books will be as amazing as they could ever be for someone like me.

If I do a rewrite, I'll put a note down that it happened. Until then, I'll see you all in the FoxClan camps, kitties!

-Ivy harper